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**NATIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES AND  
U.S. MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN EUROPE**

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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,  
*Washington, DC, Thursday, April 15, 2021.*

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 11:01 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Adam Smith (chairman of the committee) presiding.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ADAM SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM WASHINGTON, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

The CHAIRMAN. Today the full Committee is hearing—the hearing is on national security challenges and U.S. military activities in Europe. We have Ms. Laura Cooper, who is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia. And we have General Tod Wolters, who is the Commander, U.S. European Command.

As this is again a hybrid hearing, I will begin by reading the rules for said hybrid hearing.

Members who are joining remotely must be visible on screen for the purposes of identity verification, establishing and maintaining a quorum, participating in the proceeding, and voting. These members must continue to use the software platform video function while in attendance, unless they experience connectivity issues or other technical problems that render them unable to participate on camera.

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If members depart for a short while for reasons other than joining a different proceeding—I've never understood that part by the way, but I just, I keep reading it—they should leave the video function on. If members will be absent for a significant period or depart to join a different proceeding, they should exit the software platform entirely and then rejoin it if they return.

Members may use the software platform's chat feature to communicate with staff regarding technical or logistical support issues only.

Finally, I have designated a committee staff member to, if necessary, mute unrecognized members' microphones to cancel any inadvertent background noise that may disrupt the proceeding.

With that, as I said, we are here to hear about the European Command and the issues in that area. And as with all parts of the world, there are of course many.

I think top of the line for all members at the moment is what's going on in Ukraine, in Russian activities in that region in general. How we are working with Ukraine and our allies in the region to deal with the threat that Russia poses. What the best steps forward are and how we can best help the European command meet that threat.

We also continue to be very concerned about our relationship with Turkey. Incredibly important relationship. They are a key ally in many respects, but still problematic in a number of other respects, most notably with the S-400 purchase and the sanctions that have been levied on them as a result. So, curious to hear how that relationship is going forward.

We've also bounced around a little bit in the last couple of years in terms of how to exactly posture our forces in Europe. I think we are now in a good place. Would be anxious to hear from both of you about how you see that going forward. Are there changes that are necessary, what support could we offer if those changes are required.

In particular, there's the one issue of, as our relationships with Poland, Romania, Ukraine, other Eastern European countries go forward, how does that shift our focus from where our troops have traditionally been stationed. I know one big question has always been should they—should we have permanently stationed troops or rotational troops. And there's disagreement in the Pentagon about how best to handle that. Would be curious on your take.

But the overarching issue that I want to leave you with is an issue that affects the entire DOD [Department of Defense] in all of the theaters that we're engaged in, and that is the changing nature of warfare. And I think the European Command is, you know, best suited to look at this because of Russian activities.

What Russia did in Crimea a number of years ago, what they continue to do in the Eastern Ukraine, the information operations that they're engaged in across the frontier, is sort of—sort of cutting edge on where we're headed.

And what this committee is really focused on is how can we make sure that we are purchasing the equipment and being in a position to deal with the world of warfare as it exists now. And what that means basically is the incredible importance of command and control information and technology. Whoever possesses the best information is in the best position to be successful.

And there are a lot of technologies that are key to this. Certainly, artificial intelligence, because you also have to process whatever information is coming in. The better you're able to process that, the better you are.

You also have to be able to protect your command and control and information systems. There are a number of different ways to do that. We are not ideally suited right now to protect those systems.

[Off the record comment.]

It's like being heckled at a comedy club.

I'll grant you that wasn't my strongest point, but I'm working on it here, just taking it off the top of my head. So, the point is that transition, to my mind, is the single most important thing that we can do in terms of deterring our adversaries. Certainly Russia, but China as well, transnational terrorist groups.

And we are beginning to make that transition. We've seen with the bottom-up review, the blank slate review, whatever you want to call it. What the Marine Corps is doing as it's trying to reposition itself, the Air Force as well.

I think we're headed in the right direction, but we have to make intelligent purchases and put in place the right acquisition strategy to do that, to get where we need to be, to have the best information systems, to be able to protect them. And then ideally, be able to make vulnerable the information systems of our adversaries.

And there's a lot we can learn from what the Russians have been up to, including their overall information campaign, or disinformation campaign, their effort to tear down representative government in the West in general through a series of very low-cost options that are advancing their agenda. We need to really get in that game.

So I'm very curious as you watch and see what Russia has been doing in those instances that I mentioned, also in the fight that's been going on in Armenia and Azerbaijan, a lot of this played out as well.

What does that mean for what we ought to be buying, for what we ought to be providing you to make sure that you meet your requirements. So, very curious to hear about that.

With that, I will turn it over to Ranking Member Rogers for his opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MIKE ROGERS, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM ALABAMA, RANKING MEMBER. COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

European Command and our NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] allies are facing an increasingly belligerent Russia and a growing Chinese influence in their operations. Russia continues to modernize, investing in hypersonic, strategic capabilities, and information warfare. Russia's also rebuilding its Arctic presence to control emerging areas of resource exploitation and commerce.

And they're turning to new tactics to achieve their goals, employing aggression below the level of armed conflict. These new capabilities and tactics are designed to deter the United States and their allies from defending democracies on Russia's periphery. From the Black Sea to the Baltics, President Putin abhors the notion of former Soviet territories charting their own course as free and democratic nations.

I believe that the committee should continue its strong support for European Deterrence Initiative, the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, and other programs to build our capacity in Europe and empower our partners.

Where we can, it also makes sense to equip our allies and partners with lethal weapon systems and domain awareness capabilities. Investments in critical facilities, prepositioned munition stockpiles, and rotational forces keep our deterrent capabilities credible.

Every capability we build in a partner nation strengthens our ability to chart a course away from Russian intimidation. We should be more concerned about raising baseline of—raising the baseline of our partners' capabilities in Eastern Europe than about Vladimir Putin's ego. The flat truth is that he and his cronies won't be happy until they reclaim a portion of the Soviet Union's territorial glory.

No amount of hand-wringing here in Washington will appease them. We owe our allies and partners nothing less than our full and forceful support. That being said, we should also be candid with our allies as we are with our enemies. Projects like the Nord Stream 2 pipeline and NATO members' purchases of Russian military hardware amount to a huge economic, political, and propaganda victory for Putin.

Our allies shouldn't be in the business of strengthening our adversaries. We should use a whole-of-government approach to address these issues before they become diplomatic pressure points.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about how we can use diplomatic and military efforts to counter China's global ambitions in Europe. European nations are coming around to the threat of Chinese malign investment, hacking, and influence operations in their own backyard.

We can use this opportunity to blunt China's advance, promote secure supply chains, and counter Chinese propaganda. European Command covers many of our most robust and longstanding international alliances. It is also responsible to assist in the defense of Israel, our steadfast ally.

To overcome the modern threat posed by Russia and China and to ensure the protection of Israel, we need to provide the resources necessary to strengthen these alliances. Unfortunately, the budget proposed by President Biden will not do that. It cuts defense spending below the rate of inflation.

If enacted, it will mean combatant commanders like General Wolters will not have the resources and capabilities they need to do their jobs. I look forward to working with the majority to pass a defense budget that supports modernization and ensures credible deterrence.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ms. Cooper.

**STATEMENT OF LAURA K. COOPER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR RUSSIA, UKRAINE, AND EURASIA, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**

Ms. COOPER. Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Rogers, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on policy matters related to the U.S. European Command, or EUCOM, area of responsibility in my capacity overseeing the Office of International Security Affairs today.



It truly is a privilege to appear before you, and I would like to express my appreciation for the continued support from Congress, and this committee in particular, in shaping and resourcing the Department's efforts in this region. It is also absolutely an honor to appear beside General Wolters, an outstanding partner.

Today, I will highlight the most important foundation of all—of all Department of Defense efforts in this theater: our alliances. Then, I will describe our strategic approach to Europe, the importance of NATO, and capability issues of note, followed by a brief discussion of regional threats and challenges.

But first, I would like to briefly address two immediate issues of concern: escalating Russian aggression in Eastern Ukraine, and the President's decision to impose measures that will hold Russia accountable for its pattern of malign behavior.

The United States is increasingly concerned about Russia's military buildup of forces along Ukraine's border and in occupied Crimea. Russia now has more troops on the border with Ukraine than at any time since 2014. The United States remains unwavering in its support for Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

As such, we will continue to support Ukraine's long-term defense capacity and provide security assistance to enable Ukraine to more effectively defend itself against Russian aggression. We have also made clear in our engagement with Moscow that Russia needs to refrain from further escalatory actions.

Additionally, this morning the United States informed the Russian Government of its intent to hold Russia accountable for a pattern of malign behavior that includes efforts to influence the outcome of the 2020 Presidential election; the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, or SVR's, compromise of SolarWinds software; and the Main Intelligence Directorate, or GRU, efforts to encourage attacks on U.S. and coalition personnel in Afghanistan.

The President is taking hard and fast action with appropriately tailored responses to provide a clear signal of our resolve without escalation. And I would welcome further discussion on these matters with this committee today.

Russia's aggression in Eastern Europe—in Eastern Ukraine and its pattern of destabilizing behavior are examples of the increasingly challenging international security situation.

To compete in this new landscape, the Department of Defense is heeding the call of the International Security—Interim National Security Strategic Guidance and engaging our trans-Atlantic friends with renewed vigor, reclaiming our place in international institutions and revitalizing America's unmatched network of allies and partners.

As President Biden and Secretary Austin have stated on numerous occasions, the U.S. commitment to NATO remains ironclad, and the trans-Atlantic alliance remains the foundation on which our collective security and our shared prosperity are built.

To ensure NATO's deterrence and defense posture is fit to purpose to meet the security challenges of the alliance, the Department will continue to work with allies to reinvigorate and modernize the alliance, share responsibilities and investments equi-

tably, increase allied speed of decision-making, and improve military mobility across Europe to improve collective readiness.

We are encouraged that we are now in our seventh year of steady NATO defense spending increases by our allies. We expect this trend to continue, and we continue to encourage strongly our NATO allies to increase their defense budgets.

NATO's commitment to deterring nuclear attack remains a backstop of trans-Atlantic security. As Secretary Austin has stated, "Nuclear weapons should remain in NATO countries for as long as nuclear weapons remain a threat."

Deterrence also requires combat-credible, forward-deployed conventional forces to bolster the alliance's deterrence and defense posture to prevent Russian aggression. To this end, the Secretary of Defense is conducting a comprehensive Department-wide global posture review to best align U.S. overseas force presence with Presidential national security priorities.

In this increasingly competitive environment, our security remains grounded in a whole, free, and at-peace Europe built upon a credible and strong NATO alliance.

The Department is also working to improve the resilience of another frontline state in the face of Russian aggression, Georgia. The United States remains committed to assisting Georgia build its resilience and military capabilities in the face of Russia's malign efforts to undermine its sovereignty and disrupt its Euro-Atlantic integration.

Poland and the Baltics remain central to deterring Russia. The Department is bolstering NATO's eastern flank allies through security cooperation and capacity-building initiatives targeted at improving defense and security infrastructure to strengthen national resilience.

In Poland, the Department has increased its rotational presence to include the newly established Fifth Corps forward command post and a planned Aegis Ashore facility.

In the Baltics, rotational forces supporting Atlantic Resolve continue to be a departmental priority.

We continue to review our force posture to compete, to deter, and defend against Russian aggression and assertiveness in the Black Sea region and welcome the support of our NATO allies through their contributions not just to enhance forward presence in the Baltic Sea region, but also tailor forward presence in the Black Sea region, as well as their respective air policing missions.

In the Balkans, the Department continues to strengthen our history of investment in the region, which includes now some of NATO's newest member states. The U.S. presence in NATO's Kosovo Force helps maintain a safe and secure environment in the Balkans.

In Southern Europe, our presence provides a counterbalance to growing Chinese and Russian influence, whose efforts also in Africa and the Mediterranean have implications for our strategic access and freedom of movement.

While Turkey remains an important ally buttressing NATO's southern flank, the United States has been clear in opposing Turkey's procurement of the Russian S-400 anti-aircraft weapon system. Turkey's procurement of the S-400 prompted its removal from

the F-35 program, and we continue to press Turkey to remove the S-400 from its arsenal.

Israel is a major strategic partner for the United States. On January 15, the United States announced that U.S. Central Command [CENTCOM] will assume responsibility for military-to-military cooperation with Israel.

This will open up additional opportunities for cooperation with our USCENTCOM partners while maintaining strong cooperation between Israel and our European allies and partners. We will continue to work with EUCOM and CENTCOM to ensure a thorough and deliberate transfer of authority.

In conclusion, our objective is to ensure our broad and deep network of alliances and partnerships endures. The United States must continue to take an active role in the region by maintaining a ready and capable force, investing in NATO, and promoting a network of like-minded allies and partners.

This work is only possible with consistent congressional backing and stable funding. Your support for our allies and partners in Europe and for Israel is indispensable.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and I appreciate your continued support to the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, coastguardsmen, guardians, and civilians in the Department of Defense who work every day in service of the American people. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Cooper can be found in the Appendix on page 49.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. General Wolters.

**STATEMENT OF GEN TOD D. WOLTERS, USAF, COMMANDER,  
U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND**

General WOLTERS. Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Rogers, and distinguished members of the committee, on behalf of the men, women, and families who serve our Nation in the Euro-Atlantic, we extend our heartfelt thanks for your steadfast support.

It remains a privilege to serve alongside these dedicated patriots and our like-minded allies and partners. It's also great to be seated with Deputy Assistant Secretary Laura Cooper, a dedicated professional with strong ties to our valued European partners. She's been pivotal to generating peace in the Euro-Atlantic area.

As we enter into the second year of the pandemic, we work closely alongside our allies and partners to ensure this health crisis does not transform into a security crisis. We'd also like to pass our condolences to those impacted by COVID-19. The battle against the virus continues, and we must remain vigilant.

We're fully aligned with Secretary Austin's priorities to defend the Nation, take care of our people, and succeed through teamwork. Via NATO, we work closely with our allies and partners to address the evolving challenges posed by our adversaries to secure peace and protect our interests abroad.

NATO remains the strategic center of gravity and the foundation of deterrence and assurance in Europe. Everything we do is about generating peace. We compete to win. We deter, and if deterrence fails, we're prepared to respond to aggression with the full weight of the trans-Atlantic alliance. The United States relationship with

European allies and partners remains a key strategic advantage, and we must defend it.

We live in an increasingly complex and contested world. Political uncertainty, energy competition, and diffusion of destructive technology are stressing the established, rules-based international order. Threats and challengers seek to take advantage of these conditions through aggressive actions using all instruments of national power. And they're backed by increasingly capable military forces.

Adversaries amplify these malign activities and foster instability with disinformation. Success in 21st century warfare demands we embrace competition and all of its associated activities below the level of armed conflict. This is actually as critical as preparations for crisis or conflict themselves.

We're in an era of strategic competition, and winning in this era is all about ensuring that strategic competition does not morph into a global conflict. One notable example of operations, activities, and investments contributing to competition and deterrence is our robust EUCOM exercise program.

This summer, when we execute our Defender series exercises, composed of USEUCOM'S Defender-Europe and NATO's Steadfast Defender, 30,000 U.S. service members, allies, and partners from all warfare domains will demonstrate their ability to lift and shift massive forces over large swaths of territory, at speed and at scale, from the eastern periphery of the European continent. And once on station, they'll sharpen their responsiveness, resiliency, and lethality.

Our current security posture is strong, yet challenged, as evidenced with respect to the activities in Ukraine. We possess combat-credible capability across all domains: air, land, sea, space, and cyber. We will maintain and work to hone this capability to deter our adversaries in defense of partners and our interests.

The soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, guardians, coastguardsmen, and civilians of USEUCOM appreciate your support to defend the homeland forward and preserve peace for the 1 billion citizens living in the Euro-Atlantic.

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Rogers, thank you again for this opportunity, and I look forward to taking your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Wolters can be found in the Appendix on page 74.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Could both of you talk a little bit about the information operations issue in Europe? We know Russia has been very aggressive about spreading their message, which is basically to undermine the West, undermine NATO, undermine democracies, sow discord. And they've been very effective at it.

And I know for a number of years now we have been looking at responding to that. I know the combatant commanders have been concerned about it. How are we doing on beginning to get into that fight and counter what Russia's doing and get our own message out? And I'd like to hear from both of you on that.

General WOLTERS. Chairman, if I could, with the assistance of this committee, we were able to kick off with SOCOM [U.S. Special Operations Command], our Special Operations Command Combatant Commander Operation Influence Platform. And underneath that architecture is what's called WebOps [web-based operations],

and it's specifically designed to go after disinformation. And it's now a funded program with—with milestones set for future years.

The CHAIRMAN. And what's—sorry to interrupt, but what's our message? I described what Russia's message is, but what's ours?

General WOLTERS. Promote democratic values and tell the truth. And when disinformation is on the streets, highlight it.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Ms. Cooper.

Ms. COOPER. Sorry, I would point to the election, the 2020 election, as an example of Russia's aggressive disinformation efforts to divide and sow confusion and chaos in another population. It's a tactic that they've used in other places in the world, around Europe, and it hit home here in 2020. But we also saw it in our previous election.

And at the national level, we are working to deter such actions in the future and to impose costs on Russia. And that is why today, actually, the Biden administration announced a number of sanctions on specific actors within Russia that were involved in election interference.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Rogers.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you. General, what capabilities are you currently lacking in EUCOM that you've asked for in the past, and why are they important?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, the two biggest have to do with improving our overall strategic indications and warnings in command and control. It starts with two destroyers to improve our ability to see undersea, and it also culminates with F-35s.

Both are forecast to arrive on continent very soon. We anticipate receiving the first set of U.S. F-35s in the fall of 2021. And we're programmed now with the United States Navy in the 2025 and 2026 timeframe to hopefully receive two additional destroyers.

Mr. ROGERS. As we do our pivot to INDOPACOM [U.S. Indo-Pacific Command], do you see any resources or capabilities that you currently have being moved into that shift that would put you at a disadvantage?

General WOLTERS. No, sir, not at this time.

Mr. ROGERS. Great. Are you happy with the progress of prepositioning capabilities and supplies in Eastern Europe, and do you need any additional prepositioning, and if so, where?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I'm very happy. And we're on course on glide slope to close all of our Army preposition stockpiles and our Deployable Airbase System to support aerial ports in the 2024 timeframe. And with this committee's assistance with the European Deterrence Initiative, if funding continues as forecast, we should make it.

Mr. ROGERS. And we talked yesterday about your interest in having some additional prepositioning in the southeastern part of Europe. Where in particular would you like to see that?

General WOLTERS. Absolutely, Congressman. In the Romania area, we've put European Deterrence Initiative funds to improve infrastructure in those areas, and we've had great cooperation from Romania. And they also have the available ranges in multiple domains to be able to sharpen our readiness.

Mr. ROGERS. You know, we've heard that—both of you comment about the buildup of troops by Russia on the Ukrainian border.

How can we improve our international partnerships in support of Ukraine and help our NATO partners recognize that they need to be prepared to help us act in the event of aggression?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, just goes back to the information ops that was pointed out by the chairman. We have to continue to tell the truth. And the good news is as a result of this committee's support, we have a multinational joint commission in Ukraine that's assisting us with that, and we need to continue to support the joint military training group Ukraine, where we can put troops in country with military training team to allow the Ukrainian armed forces to improve their readiness. And that is ongoing.

Mr. ROGERS. Ms. Cooper, in that same vein, you know, you made reference to the fact that we've been pleased to see our NATO partners moving toward 2 percent for those who haven't made it so far. But do we still have others like very healthy economies like Germany who have not reached that threshold?

Can you tell me what, if anything, the administration is doing to encourage them to continue on that path and not backslide?

Ms. COOPER. Thank you, Congressman. I would say this is a consistent feature of our dialog with all of the NATO member states, but in particular those who have yet to meet their Wales commitment. So this is something that came up as recently as the Defense Ministerial that Secretary Austin attended, this was a theme. And it also is something that we raise in our bilateral conversations.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. And moving on here, just we have a 5-minute limit going forward, and a lot of times you will be in the middle of answering a question when that 5-minute limit hits and I feel rude cutting you off, but nonetheless, I will do it. Because we want to get to as many members as possible. So if you see that clock ticking down to 5 minutes, if you could wrap up your answers, that would be great.

And with that, I yield to Mr. Langevin for 5 minutes. Jim, are you with us? Well, Mr. Larsen is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LARSEN. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

To start, just thanks for seeing us today. To start, Gerry Connolly, Representative Connolly from Virginia, has a bill, H.R. 922, it's the Crimea Annexation Non-Recognition Act. And he's also the president of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

The purpose of this act is to basically say no Federal agency in the U.S. Government can say explicitly, implicitly anything that would imply a recognition of Crimea—the annexation of Crimea by Russians. It's certainly—I support it, and I ask the committee members to support. But I do want to use that as an intro to talk about—ask about Ukraine.

The Russians see Crimea as an annexation, we don't. The eastern oblasts are still within Ukraine, and they're seen as separatists. Are we treating them differently, are we approaching those region—those two areas of Ukraine differently? And if so, how can we help you support those approaches?

Ms. COOPER. Congressman, I would say the nature of the on-the-ground environment in both locations is different. In Eastern Ukraine, you actually have a hot war right now. Just within the

past—since January, we’ve already had 30 Ukrainian service members killed in the east. Whereas Crimea is an illegal occupation. And so, so there’s some realities on the ground that are different.

A lot of our train and equip efforts are directed at improving the capacity of the Ukrainian armed forces to defend against the active war in the east. But in terms of overall policy, it absolutely is U.S. policy to reject this illegal annexation of Ukraine and to continue to impose the sanctions on Russia as long as they hold this.

In fact, there were just a number of additional sanctions imposed today on the Russian Government, to include the builders of the Kerch Strait Bridge, which you may be familiar with, for Russia’s continued occupation of Crimea.

Mr. LARSEN. Yeah. General.

General WOLTERS. Congressman, it’s a great question. And having had the opportunity to visit from Kiev down to the Donbass area, just as you pointed out, the tone and tenor of soldiers in the vicinity of Kiev 2 years ago was a little bit different as you got further towards the southeast.

But it’s been my observation for the last 2 years as a result of good work on behalf of the multinational joint commission that that attitude, that support the whole-of-government approach on behalf of Ukraine is improving the farther you get to the southeast.

So there’s—there’s a changing environment, as evidenced by the comments from President Zelensky as he continues to look west and talked about accessions to NATO.

Mr. LARSEN. Yeah, great. I want to make a pitch here. We cannot yet do CODELs [congressional delegations]. The—our leadership and the DOD is not yet allowing that. Let me ask you this: have you thought through how we could do a COVID-19 socially distant, appropriate CODELs to EUCOM region, and have you provided that advice yet to the Secretary so we can break that loose?

General WOLTERS. We will, Congressman, and we very much want the CODELs back. And we actually have a program of actionable milestones that talks about our proposal of when and where. We will get after that soonest.

Mr. LARSEN. That’s excellent. We need to—I do know the parliamentarians, especially NATO parliamentarians, would like to see us again, if only to yell at us in person. But we’d like to return the favor sometimes as well, as well.

I’ll just make a note and then yield, that the Washington State National Guard now I think is headed to western Ukraine or in western Ukraine as part of the training mission. And it’s another reason why it’s important; I know other State and National Guards are in the Balkans.

And just in terms of our presence, to send that message to Russia that we care about Europe as much as Russia cares about Europe is important. So I’ll just leave it at that, and with that I yield back, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Turner is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TURNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, you and I had an opportunity before the hearing began to talk about the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. Many of us are hearing from both the service members and family members. They’re

very concerned about service members and their dependents who are deployed overseas.

The word we're getting is that there's been insufficient planning for the storage and transportation of Moderna and Pfizer vaccines. In many of our States, we're doing very well. Ohio's down to age 16 and above.

But yet in many of the areas, our service members that are actually deployed in areas where COVID is a greater threat than it is in some of our home States are not having adequate access to the vaccine. Some areas have been provided the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, but of course there has now been a pause as a result of CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] recommendations. What can you tell us as to how this can be resolved?

And obviously, Johnson & Johnson was a later approval. So the infrastructure and deployment for an ability to vaccinate our service members should have been undertaken well before Johnson & Johnson was even approved to give us some assurance that the people that we care about that are every day serving our Nation are going to be taken care of.

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I couldn't agree more. And big DOD INCONUS [inside the contiguous United States] has recognized this issue. And combatant commanders, specifically myself and Phil Davidson from INDOPACOM, have both expressed to the Secretary the need to accelerate the flow of vaccines, mostly for the dependents of our military members in Europe, and for Phil Davidson in the Pacific. And up to this point, we've probably been a little bit off balance.

Secretary Austin was key to point out that the percentage of those tier 1 military uniform members that have received the vaccine INCONUS should be equivalent to the same in Europe and the Pacific, and the same in—for the dependents. That has not been the case, so we're working to fix that.

As we speak, Congressman, we are transitioning in Europe from receiving 3,500 vaccines a week to be able to receive 18,000 vaccines a week and be able to store them and administer them, with a surge capacity to 23,000.

Unfortunately, with the J&J [Johnson & Johnson] cutoff, there's probably going to be about a 20 percent reduction to those surges. And we're still working on the specifics. But the site picture from within Europe for the military members and certainly for the dependents will be significantly different by the end of May than it is today.

Because we will actually triple our surge capacity. We have the storage capability, we have the medical treatment facilities, and the soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines who can administer the vaccines. And my biggest concerns is not necessarily the tier 1 military, but to get to the dependents soonest.

Mr. TURNER. Well, General, that doesn't provide me comfort, by the way, that you don't say tier 1 military. I mean, our service members need to be covered. And again, we knew this was coming. I mean, the Federal Government has been very active in the acquisition and distribution of vaccines.



And so I just, I appreciate your words, but I certainly hope that this is addressed. Because this impacts people's real lives. And of course the concerns of their families.

Shifting to the F-35, the—you mentioned it in your statements and when the ranking member was asking you about what else do you need in forward deployed. We now have the United Kingdom, Denmark, Netherlands, Belgium, Norway. Poland is apparently looking into entering the F-35. Italy, Finland, and of course we currently have the ongoing competition.

Putin is going to be looking at a whole different world as we begin to deploy the F-35 and our allies begin fielding it. It is of course the plane this is going to be necessary to keep, as you referenced, deterrence, because it is the dual-capable portion of our mission. Tell us about the F-35 and its importance in Europe.

General WOLTERS. Congressman, the F-35 contributes to campaign momentum strategically for indications and warnings, command and control, and obviously lethality. We have 81 total in Europe right now that our NATO allies and partners are using. We're programmed to get our first two.

It gives us access to be able to deter effectively anywhere on the European continent. And if called upon, to conduct interdiction. It allows us to put any target at risk, plus or minus a millisecond, with great accuracy, and allowing for access to do the same.

Mr. TURNER. How are allies reporting the plane?

General WOLTERS. They're incredibly excited, incredibly happy with its performance.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, the gentleman's time has expired.

One other announcement I should have made. We have a classified version of this hearing at 2 o'clock over in the CVC [Capitol Visitor Center]. So in order to give people a little bit of a break in between, we are going to end this portion at 1:20. So we'll go until then, get as many members as we can. And then break and reconvene at 2 o'clock in the CVC for the classified portion.

With that, Mr. Langevin is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank our witnesses for the testimony today.

I want to turn my attention to UAVs [unmanned aerial vehicles] and the threats they pose because of swarming capabilities. I particularly want to focus on the lessons learned from the recent Nagorno-Karabakh war. We saw Azerbaijan use unmanned systems not as standalone weapons, but as complex, synchronized attacks against air defense networks' conventional units.

Given the successful unmanned swarm that attacked Saudi Arabia in 2019, this isn't the first time that we've seen this. So General Wolters, how would our current integrated air defense system stand up in a similar situation, and who has the cost advantage?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, we have designated the United States Army to be the lead DOD entity for counter small UAS [unmanned aerial systems]. More importantly in Europe, we have to ensure that from an indications and warning standpoint, our integrated air and missile defense programs take into account the capabilities of these systems.

They do, it's not good enough. We have to continue to improve. It's a program that's funded, we know what the requirements are.

But more importantly for me as a USEUCOM commander, it's an issue that many of our NATO allies and partners have the capability to deter against, and strategically our new strategies and our plans all take into account enforcing our NATO allies and partners to improve in this area.

Mr. LANGEVIN. As a follow-up, how would incorporating emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and directed energy improve our responses to asymmetric and near-peer threats?

General WOLTERS. Enormous help. It allows us to see the battlespace earlier, it allows us to approach and neutralize a target at greater range with greater speed. So those are all very helpful.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you. Next, Russia aggressively invests in electronic warfare capabilities that are specifically geared toward negating our technological advantages, which is—which it successfully deployed, just by way of example, in Ukraine and Syria.

General, what is your command doing to make your systems more resilient in a communications degraded or denied environment? And more importantly, how are you training your personnel to operate in this environment?

General WOLTERS. We feel reasonably comfortable, Congressman, with the gear that we have in place. The biggest area is to ensure that the training keeps pace with the adversary's EW [electronic warfare] TTPs, tactics, techniques, and procedures. And my assessment at EUCOM is that we're in pretty good shape.

We play close attention to advancing EW technologies that Russia utilizes. We're able to witness some of that in the battlespace that you're familiar with in the environment in the vicinity of Syria, and we'll continue to improve. But for us it's critical that when it comes to EW, you have to have very good indications and warnings and you have to have very protected command and control architecture, which we are working towards.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Yeah, it's essential to make sure that we're paying close attention to that so that our enemies and adversaries can't use that asymmetric advantage or capability against us.

So let me just turn to something else. [Inaudible] cyber attack response [inaudible] coalition of partner nations is one of our most effective tools in deterring Russia, Russian cyber actions. Right now, our response speed has been in months and years, which is unacceptable, it's too slow.

Ms. Cooper, what is your information-sharing relationship with the State Department regarding cyber attribution and how could we improve it more effectively this time?

Ms. COOPER. Congressman, thank you. If I understood the question correctly, it relates to working in a whole-of-government context on Russia cyber attribution. Is that correct, sir?

Mr. LANGEVIN. To shorten the window for attribution too. Identifying and responding, real quickly.

Ms. COOPER. I see, thank you, sir. On this I can say we've actually come a long way. We still have a ways to go. Today we are attributing formally the SolarWinds cyber intrusion to Russia's SVR, their foreign intelligence service. That represents a public attribution that we are making in coordination with allies and partners who have also been affected by SolarWinds.

And you know, this is something that we initially were focused on in the past few months. Obviously we have to get this down to days, not just months. But we're also working on the process of quick release and declassification—

The CHAIRMAN. And I do apologize, but the gentleman's time has expired. If there is further follow-up there, you can take it for the record and send it to Mr. Langevin.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 99.]

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Lamborn is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to ask you both about lethal aid to Ukraine. In recent years, Congress and this committee included has authorized that. It was way overdue in my opinion, but I'm glad we're finally doing it.

General Wolters, how has lethal aid that we have provided to Ukraine helped ensure their security vis-a-vis Russia?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, thanks for the question, it goes back to that military trust factor. When a fellow soldier shows up with gear that actually convinces the Ukrainian armed force military members that this will be effective against an enemy to protect our sovereignty, whether it's lethal or non-lethal. But when they can see both it's a plus.

And as you well know, with the assistance of this committee, since 2017 the Javelin has been a very productive program. And we've got approximately 360 missiles and a fair amount of launchers in storage. And today, Ukrainian soldiers know exactly how to grab those Javelins out of the storage site, get to the foxhole, and if called upon, to use that munition to defend themselves.

They have the confidence that they can do this. Not only do we supply the munitions, but we rotate military training teams in to make sure that their proficiency is where it needs to be.

And when I addressed earlier the mental disposition of the Ukrainian armed forces as you work from Kiev up in the northwest portion of Ukraine down towards the Donbass, that improvement in attitude of the soldiers is partly due to this increase in trust on behalf of these contributions.

Mr. LAMBORN. Excellent. Ms. Cooper, what is your view?

Ms. COOPER. Congressman, we're very proud to be able to provide defensive lethal assistance. And in addition to the Javelin capability that General Wolters mentioned, I think it's very important that we have expanded our assistance to not just focus on the land domain, but also the maritime domain.

So that means that the patrol boats that we're providing will have a defensive lethal capability on them.

Mr. LAMBORN. And are there additional steps that we should take? I don't know if that's been actually—if that has actually materialized yet or not. If not, we'd like to help, I'd like to help assist in that regard. Is there—are there additional steps that have not yet materialized that you would like to see?

Ms. COOPER. Sir, from an authorities perspective, I think we have the right authorities, and we have been able to provide the right lethal assistance, again both on the land domain and the

maritime domain at this point. And we appreciate the support of the committee.

Mr. LAMBORN. General Wolters, anything to add to that?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I think we're in good shape as we've—as we look at what DOD is doing right now with the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative. Those funds are looking to be targeted directly in these areas, and I don't see any obstacles at this point.

Mr. LAMBORN. Okay, thank you. And General Wolters, changing subjects, how would you characterize NATO support for the ongoing modernization of our nuclear enterprise, the nuclear triad, which each of those three legs are getting upgrades in different ways. How does NATO view that, our NATO allies?

General WOLTERS. It's improving, Congressman. We actually for the first time in 67 years produced a NATO military strategy and a concept for the deterrence and defense of the Euro-Atlantic area. And we approached NATO with the opportunity to actually address this subject.

It was well received, and as we speak, we've had many participants come into our NAC, North Atlantic Council, and entertain discussions on the nuclear enterprise and what we're actually doing.

So the campaign momentum is in the right direction. And we now actually have plans that are being codified that address the value of a triad and what it does for strategic deterrence.

Mr. LAMBORN. Ms. Cooper, would you have anything to add to that?

Ms. COOPER. Nothing to add, thank you, Congressman.

Mr. LAMBORN. Okay, and General Wolters, I would have to think that when the 30 or so countries that are under our nuclear umbrella see us modernizing, that gives them a lot of reassurance.

General WOLTERS. Yes, Congressman.

Mr. LAMBORN. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Courtney is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, you alluded to the—one of your top needs to have two destroyers. And you cited the sort of undersea work that they would do. Can you talk about that in a little more detail?

General WOLTERS. Yes, Congressman. For the last 3 years, we've seen an increase in under-the-sea activity on behalf of Russia in the vicinity of the Greenland-Iceland-U.K. [United Kingdom] Gap. And we—I would adore the opportunity to talk more to this in a different setting. But what I can say is a consistent increase in activity, and the destroyers' participation in the undersea warfare, C2 [command and control], and I&W [indications and warnings] is absolutely, positively critical.

And as you well know, we have four of those in Europe, and they are the workhorses of deterrence, extending all the way into the Black Sea, Eastern Mediterranean, all the way back around the Mediterranean, all the way up into the Arctic and the Barents. And as we continue to do the math for basic needs to cover down adequately, we believe that two more is what is required.

Mr. COURTNEY. Well, thank you. Again, before COVID, a number of us did a CODEL to sort of focus on anti-submarine warfare. We actually visited Keflavik Air Base up in Iceland, which the Bush administration had closed in the wake of, you know, the Cold War coming to an end, quote—air quotes. And now it's been reopened for P-8 flights.

Admiral Gary Roughead, the former CNO [Chief of Naval Operations], used to testify before this committee that the best anti-submarine warfare platform is another submarine. Can you talk about, again, some of the work that, again, our submarine force is doing in that arena?

General WOLTERS. So I certainly agree with Admiral Roughead's conclusion, because he certainly knows best. And I contend that our submarine fleet is performing admirably. But part of the command and control apparatus that is involved in this process involves other assets, to include maritime patrol aircraft like the P-8, as well as what a destroyer does.

So to comprehensively defend in this area from undersea all the way to 25,000 feet with a P-8, we need to make sure that we have the right hardware and software involved. And we're traversing in that direction, and our sub force is performing admirably. But it's very challenging with respect to numbers.

Mr. COURTNEY. Right. I thank you. And I think General Scaparrotti, your predecessor, described it as we're sort of playing zone defense as opposed to man to man. But we could probably get into that more in a classified setting.

You know, when we talk about Russia's sort of malign activities, obviously the maritime domain. We saw it in the Ukraine, where they seized the three ships in international waters. The U.N. [United Nations] Convention just, you know, unanimously reprimanded that action.

We've had other combatant commanders before this committee in recent weeks and I've asked them all about whether or not you think, given the fact that the, you know, we're in sort of a new era, whether it's Indo-Pacific or in the European theater, where countries, Russia and China, are trying to exercise maritime control, which really goes up against the, I think, norm of freedom of navigation, which has been basically the rule of the road since World War II.

General, and I'm going to ask Ms. Cooper as well, I mean, do you support like your colleagues who testified that the U.S. should become a full participant in the U.N. Convention on Law of the Sea?

General WOLTERS. Yes, Congressman.

Mr. COURTNEY. And Ms. Cooper.

Ms. COOPER. I would just say that the administration has not issued a formal review of this or opinion on this yet, so I would have to defer the question to General Wolters's military advice.

Mr. COURTNEY. Great. Well, again, we're, just so you know, in the House, even though we don't get to vote on that, we will have a bipartisan resolution with myself and Congressman Young from Alaska calling on the Senate to really, again, the world has been changing in the maritime sphere.

And not being able to be an active party or even observer, which we found out in the Philippines's challenge to South China Sea, it's just, it's ridiculous.

And we're in the company of, you know, North Korea, Libya, Syria, you know, in terms of not being full, ratified participants in this process. Which, again, worked in the case of Ukraine. The U.N.'s decision actually ended up having Russia release those ships and those sailors. But again, it shows it has important value to this country, which is a maritime country.

So I'll get off my soapbox and yield back. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Wittman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Wolters, Ms. Cooper, thanks so much for joining us today.

General Wolters, I'm going to go to you and build upon the assertive efforts the United States has pursued in making sure that our NATO allies spend the 2 percent of the GDP [gross domestic product] on defense. I hope this administration continues what has been that assertive effort.

But it's not only how much our allies spend, but it's how they spend it, to make sure that it's complementary to the assets within the theater, not things that are duplicative or things that don't add to our capacity to deter and defend within that particular region.

You know, one of the elements I think is incredibly important is to look at, you know, how that's being done. Look at what's happening with Russia with the snap exercises.

So are you seeing the spending by our allies there being complementary or duplicative? And are we generating the capacity to be able to surge and sustain if necessary, just as the Russians practice in a way that I think is meant to send a message, but also lets us look at their ability to sustain also? So I want to get your perspective on that.

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I would say that the transparency in alignment of our expenditures across the 30 nations is improving. And we've started by redoing a strategy that is geared towards the 21st century that is more whole-of-government, whole-of-nation, to include military contributions, that takes into account all-domain awareness and winning in competition, not waiting for crisis or conflict to win, but win in competition.

So with all this in mind, the new strategy has allowed us to go back and develop new strategic plans. And those plans ultimately call for requirements to deliver the appropriate competition effect in a particular area. And it allows nations to establish military requirements to go after what is needed.

And that architecture had proven very, very worthy in the recent decision by the United Kingdom with respect to producing their military strategy. And what we've also done in the U.S. as an example of a better transparency and alignment from the plans to requirements standpoints to make sure that we can generate more peace in Europe.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, General Wolters. Let me switch gears a little bit and point to the political crisis that began in 2014 in Ukraine that sparked a war that continues today.

Ms. Cooper, you pointed to the number of casualties that are there today. On that track, casualties will exceed in 2021 what occurred in 2020. I think all those things are incredibly concerning.

Another thing that's very concerning is to watch at what's happening with the Russian Black Sea Fleet. And you see what they are doing within that area and the capability that they are building. Modernization efforts there I think are very alarming, especially with the warmwater access that they have through that Black Sea now that creates a strategic challenge for the United States in many other ways.

Do you see that the modernization effort for the Black Sea Fleet is disproportional to other Russian modernization efforts? Do you see that as being a strategic challenge for us within building that particular capability there?

And do you believe that them taking Crimea and claiming that now gives them a strategic foothold in that area that helps them in that effort to modernize the Black Sea Fleet and to extend influence and create threats and uncertainty outside of that area to the United States?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I see a concerted effort on behalf of Russians' maritime forces in the Baltics, in the Barents, and in the Black Sea. Again, in all three of those areas fairly comprehensive and fairly equal. And I certainly agree with you. Our vigilance is sky high in all those areas from a military maritime perspective.

And every point that you alluded to with respect to potential intentions, we are preparing for and planning for and expecting it to occur.

Mr. WITTMAN. Very good. Ms. Cooper, any thoughts on that?

Ms. COOPER. Congressman, I appreciate the question. On the Black Sea, I would say that this is an area of increased policy focus. And we're taking an approach that looks holistically at all of our allies and partners in the region. We've started with efforts to build maritime domain awareness capacity. This is in Ukraine, Georgia, Bulgaria, and Romania.

And I already earlier referenced some of the maritime capabilities that we're supporting the government of Ukraine with.

Mr. WITTMAN. Very good, thank you. Quick question, I know I only have a few seconds left. Choke point, the Turkish Straits there at the Black Sea. Turkey being a NATO ally, the unfortunate greater alignment now it seems like with Russia than the United States. Is that a long-term issue for us in how we deal with Turkey, and also with them as a NATO ally?

The CHAIRMAN. And sadly, that one will have to be taken for the record or come later. The gentleman's time has expired.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 99.]

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Speier is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you both for your leadership.

Ms. Cooper, I want to thank you for always being available to talk with me and others about many of the issues we have in the region. I'd like to talk to you today about the large-scale offensive that Azerbaijan engaged in against its neighbor Armenia with the

coordination of Turkey over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh.

It caused more than 5,000 deaths, displaced roughly 100,000 people from their homes, and caused immeasurable suffering. Azerbaijan continues to hold over 200 Armenian prisoners of war. And there's been abuse and mistreatment that's truly shocking.

The U.S. provided \$100 million to Azerbaijan in violation, really in defiance, of nearly two decades' parity in U.S. security assistance to Armenia and Azerbaijan. I think we're sending a terrible message to Armenia. And because we did not engage in terms of getting the parties to the Minsk Group table for negotiations, Russia stepped in and now has yet another foothold in that region.

And you mentioned in your earlier comments how critical it was for us to engage in there. So my question to you is that are you clear now of the relevance of maintaining parity between the two countries in terms of aid? And what are we going to do in terms of providing humanitarian assistance to all those who've been displaced?

Ms. COOPER. Congresswoman, thank you so much for raising this important issue set. The war this fall was a tragedy on so many levels and we deplore the loss of life. We have spent a lot of time trying to back then de-escalate the situation, and now continuing to talk with Azerbaijan and Armenia about what we can achieve in a peaceful way forward.

In terms of our—also in terms of the aftermath of the conflict, we have been urging Azerbaijan specifically to release the detainees. This has been a line that not just my State Department colleagues have offered but also Defense Department, myself included.

In terms of the paradigm for our assistance, we want to have very strong and stabilizing relationships with all of the countries in the region, with Armenia, with Georgia, and with Azerbaijan. We believe that we can exert a positive influence on all three countries.

In terms of Azerbaijan specifically, our assistance has really been focused on areas that are important to U.S. national security. It's been focused on the Coast Guard domain, so Caspian Sea.

Ms. SPEIER. I understand that, but in the end, it allows them money that they can then use as they did against Armenia. So I just think we've got to look long and hard at their conduct and not be rewarding them for bad behavior moving forward.

Let me move on to General Wolters. Some organizations here in the United States, such as the Anti-Defamation League, have noticed an increasing connection between violent extremism, white supremacy groups in the United States, and groups in some of the European countries. We've looked at that in the Military Personnel Subcommittee as it relates to service members as well.

So, given this problem with extremism in some parts of the military, what steps are you taking to combat this problem in your unique position in—at EUCOM?

General WOLTERS. Thank you, Congressman. It's a—it's an imperative that we continue to improve good order and discipline and treat each other with dignity and respect. And as we start down this path of embracing extremism, for the duration of our military careers, and in USEUCOM I was quick to point out to our com-



manders, extremism won't go away. And when you take the oath and you put on the cloth, it will be a responsibility of yours to be intrusive with respect to finding it, getting rid of it, and finding ways to communicate with others what tactics, techniques, and procedures need to go forward to rectify it.

So the—the one-day session that we had for feedback was very, very helpful. We've got a long ways to go. We're just to the start. But we're going to have to embrace this for the duration of our careers to fix it.

Ms. SPEIER. I encourage you to use the opportunity you have within the Department to look at the social media of recruits before they enlist to make sure we are not augmenting the number of white supremacists within the military that already exist. And I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Ms. Hartzler is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Thank you very much. Thank you to our witnesses. I'd like to cover questions about China and troop movements and Turkey. But I don't know if we'll have time for all of that. But I'll start off with General Wolters. You know, there's no question that Russia is our number one threat in Europe. They've shown time and again that they will invade a country and have malign influence. But while they're doing that, China also—it gives them an opportunity to expand their influence—their Belt and Road Initiative, their economic investments in the area. And I'm—really would like to get your feedback on what you're hearing from our European allies. First of all, do they recognize the threat of China? And what are their steps, or counter steps—are they taking? Do you see and do they see that 5G is a concern? And are—the European allies concerned about the growing expansion and partnership with Russia in the Arctic and the Norwegian Sea? So a lot of questions there, but I'd appreciate your perspective.

General WOLTERS. Congresswoman, first, the awareness of malign influence with respect to 5G, with respect to seaports, with respect to economic interest with aerial ports is—is markedly improving. I would have told you a year ago with respect to China, my number one concern was—was proliferation of 5G. What has happened over the course of the last year—5G with China Huawei and ZTE was—was spread into 15 separate nations. As a result of the U.K.'s position with 5G to reverse course and no longer go with China, other nations have followed suit. As we speak, 8 of those 15 nations have enacted restrictions against Huawei 5G and we're still working with the other 7.

We're very concerned about the economic interest that China continues to display with respect to ports—and you're very familiar with the numbers with respect to what they—what they do to impact shipping capacity. So today our number one issue is proliferation with China economic interests with seaports and aerial ports, and we're still concerned about 5G. But the awareness on behalf of—the NATO nations and our partners is improving.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Great. Well thank you for your work on that. For several years I've been concerned about the—the ability of our troops to move throughout Europe. You talked about the exercise that we're going to conduct again this summer. But specifically

dealing with railroad track gauge size differences, and when you enter the—the parts—the Baltic areas and everything that used to be controlled by the Soviet era, they—they're not compatible and you have a stoppage of the movement of the equipment. So where are we at on that? And what do we need to do to get after that problem?

General WOLTERS. We're improving. My goal was to improve the speed of road and rail from Central Germany to the Eastern European border with each passing day by at least a second. And that is certainly taking case—and this committee's contributions with EDI [European Deterrence Initiative] have allowed us to improve infrastructure to put prepositioned stockpiles where they need to be to take off some of the pressure with respect to demand signals on road and rail until we can get those fixed. We've set up a much better command architecture. In NATO we established a three-star headquarters 2 years ago. The Joint Support Enabling Command—their sole responsibility is to logistically cover down and tackle the number one strategic is, move at speed in all domains from west to east. So we're making gains.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Something that I have advocated for is the ability of the rail cars to be able to move and change very quickly when they get to that point—the—to move the actual wheels so that they can fit, rather than unloading everything onto—is there some discussion of doing something like that?

General WOLTERS. Germany has some wonderful solutions in that area, and they are moving out to enact that. We're still challenged a little bit with some of the other nations. But—but what we have today is a system in place that allows Estonia to have access to the same kind of tactics, techniques, and procedures, and advances that Germany sees. So we'll—we'll gain quicker improvement.

Mrs. HARTZLER. And very quickly, the—and I'll—I'll go to Ms. Cooper. Turkey, S-400—what is the Biden administration's policy with pushing back on Turkey in this realm? And what do you see can be done in relation to Turkey and NATO and all of our workings with them?

Ms. COOPER. Just in the interest of time, I'll—I'll briefly just say that we do see S-400 as incompatible with F-35. So they're out of the F-35 program. We have been urging Turkey to remove the S-400. That is a consistent point of, you know, diplomacy and in mil-mil [military-to-military] conversations. But at the end of the day, they're a NATO ally. And so we still work with them as a NATO ally and we value their contributions internationally—to include in Afghanistan.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Brown is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank our panelists for your presentations today and making yourselves available and your service to our country.

General Wolters, I'd like to ask you about infrastructure. The United States, EU [European Union], and NATO have been focused on European infrastructure over the last several years. Everything from the EU committing 1.5 billion euros for military mobility, to

streamlining cross-border movements, to adapting European transport networks for dual use to accommodate the military needs. Can you talk a little bit about your assessment about infrastructure to support our military mobility, and also how you're using Defense Europe 21, the exercise that began last month, to assess and to continue prioritizing—perhaps reprioritizing the infrastructure needs?

General WOLTERS. Yes sir, thank you for the great question. We're able to take these large exercise, Congressman, and we can actually track a company and track a battalion. And when they hit the port in Bremerhaven, we can time how long it takes them to get to their foxholes on the eastern perimeter. And we look for improvements over time. And with this committee's great contributions with the European Deterrence Initiative, we have been able to get after that infrastructure—not only from a movement standpoint, but from a prepositioned stockpile standpoint. And for Defender-Europe 21, they've—there's four major exercises. The actual last portion is—is a C2 exercise that looks back and examines how well we did in joint forcible entry, how well we did at integrated air and missile defense, and how well we were able to shoot, move, and communicate with Army force elements—specifically timing their speed to get to their foxholes. So it's a—it's an area of great concern to me. Strategically I start with two initial concerns, speed and posture. And speed has a lot to do with the subject, sir, and we're making gains.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you. And you're [inaudible] you're comfortable with the level of coordination with our allies on prioritizing that infrastructure needs?

General WOLTERS. I am, Congressman. And I am also comfortable with our NATO allies and partners' willingness to take the lead in this area.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you. My second question—on Tuesday Secretary Austin was in Berlin and he spoke to the expansion of our presence in Germany by 500 personnel. He went on to say that it's there to strengthen our deterrence and defense. And he identified space and cyber and electronic warfare capabilities as components of what those additional 500 personnel would bring. Can you speak to whether or not that 500 would be a permanent forward presence? Is it going to be a rotational presence? And maybe more broadly speak about the—the mix of rotational versus forward presence and whether we've got the right balance today.

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I'll start with the latter first. As you well know, the mix is always a—it depends—SOFA [status of forces agreement] agreements, type of domain, concerns for the service going forward. But right now I'm convinced that we've got the right mix in the ground domain with one rotational armored brigade combat team.

With respect to your first series of questions, there are two elements to Secretary Austin's announcement, a multi-domain task force and a theater fires organization. And our plan for right now is for both of those to be permanently assigned forces at Wiesbaden in perpetuity.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Scott is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General, last month you moved us to WATCHCON 1, which is potential imminent crisis with regard to Ukraine. We saw NATO planes have to intercept as many as 10 Russian warplanes in a single day last March. And there were public reports—the word that is used is “massive” buildup of Russian troops and equipment near Crimea. Is—is massive the right word in your opinion to describe the buildup of Russian troops in—on the borders of Crimea?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I would adore the opportunity to get to specific numbers. But what I can say is there is a very large ground domain force that has moved from the Western Military District and the Southern Military District to the vicinity of—of Crimea and the Donbass. There is a sizable air force. And there is also a notable maritime force that has shifted as well. It is a—  
[Simultaneous speaking.]

General WOLTERS [continuing]. Concern, our vigilance is high.

Mr. SCOTT. And are they—are they pushing the supply lines forward as well to supply those troops and the equipment that is—that is moved into the area?

General WOLTERS. Sir, that activity has plateaued. And again, I—I would like to talk more in a different environment. But I can tell you as of right now that activity has plateaued.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay. I don't have any further questions, Mr. Chairman. General, as we get into the—you know, the classified briefing, my interest is in the number of NATO intercepts—currently versus what they were over the last 6 to 12 months—as well as what the size of the force is that we see from Russia today versus where it was over the last several months, and then what—what, you know, we're seeing from our NATO allies as far as the—the lethal support for—for the Ukraine. And I realize that all of those will have to be done in a classified setting. So I will, out of respect for time, yield the remainder of my time so that other members can ask their questions and look forward to those answers in the classified session.

The CHAIRMAN. All right, thank you. Mr. Keating is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll try to get to three questions. First of all, just a quick follow-up, Ms. Cooper, on the Azerbaijan-Armenia war that was terrible [inaudible] but in my other capacity of chair of the committee of [inaudible] working to reinforce the position of [inaudible] release of those POWs [prisoners of war] that are there. And I just wanted to know how hopeful the prospects are regarding peace and stability in the region.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you get a—sorry, Bill, you're breaking up a little bit. Did you get enough of that?

Ms. COOPER. I believe so. If the question pertains to peace and stability in the Caucasus region, then I can—I can answer that. Is that—is that correct?

Mr. KEATING. Yes, specifically release of the POWs with Azerbaijan and Armenia in the wake of the—the terrible war that was there. And—

[Simultaneous speaking.]

Mr. KEATING [continuing]. Prospect for peace and stability. Can you hear? Am I breaking up still?

[Simultaneous speaking.]

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, we got that. We got that, thank you. Go ahead, Ms. Cooper.

Ms. COOPER. Yes thank you, Congressman. I would say the lead for the—the discussions on the release of the detainees is with the State Department, so I am less familiar with the day-to-day on that and would probably defer to them for their overall assessment. I would say more broadly I do have concerns about the peace and stability in the region. I do not see it as a positive development that at the end of this conflict Russia now has 2,000 peacekeepers—or so-called peacekeepers—in—on Azerbaijan soil. They already have forces in Armenia and of course they illegally occupy sovereign Georgia in both Abkhazia and South Ossetia. So—so to me this is not a positive development. That said, we are kind of looking at how we can play a supporting role in the Defense Department to State Department led efforts to—

[Simultaneous speaking.]

Mr. KEATING. Okay. Thank you so much. I hate to interrupt, but I wanted to get to—

[Simultaneous speaking.]

Ms. COOPER. Please.

Mr. KEATING [continuing]. Another question. The Wagner Group—I don't know if we touched on a lot of what's going on for [inaudible] will this curtail or help curtail the Wagner Group activities given his association with this? And in Europe, I know it's expanding in Syria into Africa—what's the status of the use of the Wagner Group? Did you—

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I—I—this is General Wolters. I got the last portion in—what I can say in this setting is—is what we witnessed from—from the Wagner Group starting 2 years ago has persisted in those geographical regions that you addressed.

Mr. KEATING. All right, again—just the last area—the importance of the European Deterrence Initiative. You know, there were cuts made in that and the—and I don't think in my own discussions with people in Europe that that was well received, although diplomatically—they were very careful with what they said. What's the status of that? And would it require more funding and more support? General.

[Simultaneous speaking.]

General WOLTERS. Congressman, this is General Wolters. We—we've been very pleased with this committee's support for EDI. I don't know what exactly will unfold in 2022, but I suspect the EDI portion will be reduced. And I will tell you that every single cent that is part of that EDI is incredibly important to improve our campaign momentum in indications and warnings, command and control, and mission command. So with any reduction there are going to be challenges, but we certainly appreciate the funding that has been in place and we hope it continues in the future.

Mr. KEATING. It's an area of my concern and I hope that we can fund that to a greater amount. With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. DesJarlais is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. I apologize, he was there until—Mr. DesJarlais, can you hear me?

Dr. DESJARLAIS. I can.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. It is not our day for technology. We're not—we're not hearing.

[Simultaneous speaking.]

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, buffering—which is not a good thing. Wow. We just pretty much lost everybody.

Mr. Gallagher, we'll go ahead and let you give a shot and then we'll try to get folks back online here. Mr. Gallagher is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to—I guess to put it bluntly, what's the likelihood of an invasion of Ukraine in the next few weeks?

General WOLTERS. Low to medium.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Say again?

General WOLTERS. Low to medium.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Low to medium? Thank you. I hope to follow up in classified session as well. Russia has an assortment of intermediate-range missile systems, including the Iskander ballistic missile, which Janes reports is currently being deployed along the Ukrainian border. Given this deployment and the Russian threat, just how important are long-range precision fires to your ability to deter aggression in Europe?

General WOLTERS. Tremendously important, and that multi-domain task force that Secretary Austin just talked about is a key step towards improving our ability to fire from ground to ground.

Mr. GALLAGHER. And how would programs like the Marine Corp's long-range precision fires program, or the Army's PRSM [Precision Strike Missile] system contribute to your operational flexibility as a combatant commander?

General WOLTERS. Great contributions.

Mr. GALLAGHER. And what would be the—some of the potential future consequences if Congress were to refuse to provide you with such a capability?

General WOLTERS. It would impact our campaign momentum from a lethality standpoint.

Mr. GALLAGHER. And—sorry to keep beating this horse, but—the budget summary released by the Biden administration last week specifically calls out long-range fires and finds, quote, the safety and security of the Nation requires a strong, sustainable, and responsive mix of long-range strike capabilities. Do you agree?

General WOLTERS. I do.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Thank you, sir. Now I will shift gears a little bit. Just last week an anti-mining political party blocked a Chinese-backed firm's access to some of Greenland's massive rare earth deposits. Given the critical importance of rare earths to the U.S. defense supply chain, it would benefit us to pay greater attention to Greenland, its security, and adversary activity there. I'd

just be curious to get your thoughts on—on the importance of Greenland.

Ms. COOPER. Thank you, Congressman. We—we agree that Greenland is a very important location and our conversations with the Kingdom of Denmark about the security of the broader region to include Chinese investments and Chinese concerns in the region have reflected that.

Mr. GALLAGHER. And going forward, how do you intend to continue to ensure the security of Greenland and its resources given that our adversaries obviously recognize it's important economically? And where do you see Greenland's place in EUCOM's broader strategic picture?

General WOLTERS. At the heart, Congressman, as you well know, Denmark never lets me forget about the equities that they represent in Greenland. And as we've developed that—that concept for deterrence and defense of the Euro-Atlantic area, it specifically points out the comprehensive geographical approach that has to take place and identifies Greenland.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Thank you. I yield back the remainder of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Crow is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROW. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to begin by asking about Ukraine—just to follow on to Mr. Gallagher's comment. He had asked about the threat of a Russian invasion of Ukraine in the next few weeks. You had characterized that as low to medium, General Wolters and Ms. Cooper. Would that assessment be higher if I were to ask that and say, what is the risk between now and the end of the year?

[Pause.]

General WOLTERS. The answer is it depends. And I would have to take each and every second of the day from this point until tomorrow to give you a different answer. So I know that's not what you want to hear, but we continue to examine every single part of the environment in all domains to make sure that we—

[Simultaneous speaking.]

Mr. CROW. Well let me ask it this way. You were able to make an assessment based on him asking over the next couple of weeks. Based on the current trajectory, and what we know now, does that threat continue to increase beyond the next 2 weeks?

General WOLTERS. It depends, Congressman, on the disposition of the forces. My—my sense is, with the trend that I see right now, that the likelihood of an occurrence will start to wane.

Mr. CROW. So when you say it depends—so you were able to make an assessment based on the next 2 weeks. You gave a—you get a concrete assessment, low to medium. So you are only able to give an assessment 2 weeks out, is that what you're telling me?

General WOLTERS. In a different setting I can give you a deeper assessment based on—

[Simultaneous speaking.]

Mr. CROW. Okay, that—

General WOLTERS [continuing]. Strategic assets.

Mr. CROW [continuing]. That's the answer I need, then. We can follow up this afternoon. Ms. Cooper, do you have any additional thoughts on that?

Ms. COOPER. Congressman, no, other than to say we're watching this very closely at the highest levels.

Mr. CROW. Okay. Next question is, Mr. Bacon and I are co-chairs in the Military Resiliency and Energy Caucus and we are very concerned about energy resiliency for our installations around the world. We've had a lot of discussions about the reliance of some of our installations on Russian gas. Can you just talk about the risk that a reliance on that Russian fuel source poses to our installations in Germany in particular?

General WOLTERS. It's a high risk for those nations' militaries that rely on Russian gas. As you know, Congressman, in the U.S. we work very, very hard with our reserves to ensure that we, to the max extent practical, do not as the U.S. DOD rely on Russian gas.

Mr. CROW. But to our allies that we're integrated with, there is a high risk?

General WOLTERS. It is.

Mr. CROW. And last, General Wolters, regarding Russia's involvement in the Arctic—I have spent a fair amount of time in Svalbard, actually, and have been to places like Barentsberg and others. Is it your characterization—would love for Ms. Cooper maybe to start on this—that the Russians are pushing the boundaries of the Treaty of Svalbard to create logistical supply chains at facilities there to enhance their ability to project power into the Arctic?

Ms. COOPER. Thank you, Congressman. I would say I can't give you a legal read of—of the treaty, but in general terms, we are concerned about what we see as Russia's attempts to—to control maritime traffic. And so this is something that has been the focus of our, you know, bilateral conversations with Russia. But also a topic of conversation among the Arctic powers—you know, U.S. and our allies and partners.

Mr. CROW. General Wolters.

General WOLTERS. I concur. What I will say, Congressman, is I am pleased with the strategic architecture by the European nations to place greater focus in the vicinity of the Arctic for the precise reasons that Laura Cooper talked about.

Mr. CROW. Thank you. General Wolters, you know, we—we're limited in our ability during Defender-Europe to fully assess transportation ability and the ability to move forces because of the pandemic. What needs to be done going forward—I'd say the next year, in the near term to address those capability gap assessments because of the—the limited nature of that exercise?

General WOLTERS. Great question, Congressman. We're going to have two large sample sizes—one from Defender-Europe 20 that's already taken place—we're in the middle of it. We had to curtail some of our activity. But we did get a lot of lift and shift of massive forces. And then we'll take a sample of what takes place with Defender-Europe 21 and be able to point out after a good, constructive after-action review where some of our LIMFACS [limiting factors] are. And we've got a red team assigned in all domains to be an in-



hibitor of advancement. So we're—we're excited about the fact that we're placing a lot of emphasis in this area.

Mr. CROW. So you're—it sounds like you're pretty confident. You have a plan in place to address those capability gaps and make those—make those assessments over the next year?

General WOLTERS. Absolutely. And EDI is incredibly helpful for mitigation.

Mr. CROW. Wonderful. Thank you. Well I thank you both for your service to the country and for doing this important work and look forward to the discussion in the closed session. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. We will give Mr. DesJarlais another shot here. I believe we have the technical fixes. You are up, sir.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. All right, thank you—thank you, Mr. Chairman. General Wolters, could you just briefly explain the importance of our nuclear weapons capability and how it serves to reassure our allies in deterring these strategic non-nuclear attacks from adversaries like Russia?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, we've certainly had the nuclear triad in place as a strategic deterrence umbrella in Europe for well over six decades. And—and the prosperous peace that we've been able to enjoy is—is certainly attributed to that. So it's—it's very important from that standpoint.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. If the United States were to adopt a no first use policy, how do you believe this would be perceived or received by our allies?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I think you would get a mixed return depending upon the ally's awareness of the nuclear enterprise. And I—I'm not equipped to give you a country-by-country return on that, but I think you'd get some mixed responses.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Okay. How do you feel about no first use policy?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I currently support the U.S. position on not adhering to the nuclear no first use policy in accordance with the Nuclear Posture Review of 2018.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. If we were to adopt such a policy, do you believe that Russia in turn would restrict their own nuclear policy in any substantive way?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I'm not sure what Russia would do, but I do know we—we would probably be in a position to where we wouldn't trust the decision that they make.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Okay. I just have some concerns and I hope the Biden administration is tuning in to this hearing because in the past President Biden had expressed his support of a no first use policy, and I hope he would seriously rethink that position. And you know, look at what our allies would say. Granted, you said there was a mixed response. Let's turn to Israel for a minute. General, in your statement you noted the tremendous strides Israel has made under the Trump administration normalizing relationships with Arab world and improving regional security. Do you foresee the momentum of these accomplishments carrying over into this administration?

General WOLTERS. I do, Congressman.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. What are some of the obstacles that you see in continuing these success—successes, and what can we do to help overcome them?

General WOLTERS. I think the degree of cooperation for exchange of information is—is productive. I think that needs to continue. And if we wind up having obstacles in that area it would be of concern. Right now the ability to information share with Israel, mil to mil, is very, very effective.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Ms. Cooper, could you explain the current state of the Department of Defense's assessment regarding a transfer of Israel from European Command to the Central Command area of operations?

Ms. COOPER. Yes, thank you Congressman. The—the current state of play is that there was a decision to affect the transfer, but that transfer is still in—in process in the sense that we are carefully analyzing every aspect to ensure that only when we are confident that it will be a seamless transition will that formal transition occur. And the concept here is to ensure that there's nothing that is impacted negatively in terms of Israel's tremendous relationship with—with European allies and with European Command. But only that Israel will benefit from greater access to mil-to-mil relationships in the Central Command area of responsibility. So that's—that's the criteria we're looking at. Over.

Dr. DESJARLAIS. Okay. And—thank you both for your service and for being here today. And I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Ms. Luria is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LURIA. Thank you. And General Wolters, I wanted to shift back to the discussion that some of my colleagues brought up earlier about naval presence in the EUCOM theater. And I had an opportunity to discuss this specifically a little bit yesterday with General VanHerck with—relative to the Arctic and kind of how the forces are allocated when we look at the Arctic. And having three combatant commanders whose geographic areas converge on that area.

So essentially with USINDOPACOM, they have a large number of forces assigned, “forces for” [Forces for Unified Commands]. You have some naval forces assigned, but not particularly attributed to that mission, more in tune with conducting ballistic missile defense and operating in the Mediterranean. And USNORTHCOM [U.S. Northern Command] has zero naval forces assigned by the “forces for” document. Can you first describe any additional needs you feel that you have for naval forces? I know you mentioned two destroyers earlier. But specifically with regards to the Arctic. And then furthermore, do you have any concerns about the command and control—the operability for sort of a unified command when countering threats in the Arctic because of the three combatant commanders having geographic areas that intersect in basically one theater?

General WOLTERS. Well, Congresswoman, with respect to the command and control between the three U.S. combatant commanders, I am very comfortable. We have operated for decades across unified command plan boundaries and we understand

ADCON [administrative control], OPCON [operational control], and TACON [tactical control].

As far as needs in the region are concerned, from a U.S. perspective, as you well know through many of your initiatives, we have worked with the Coast Guard and we plan on going the direction of the addition of six additional icebreakers in the future. And I think that is very, very important.

And my request with respect to the two DDGs [guided-missile destroyers] has everything to do with the Arctic and what is on the periphery with respect to what happens in the Greenland-Iceland-U.K. Gap. I am very pleased with the European nations' increase in involvement in the Arctic region. The Northern Sea Route is very precious to them. It is a treasure that—the nations understand that we need to protect it and they are getting very, very involved with respect to establishing military plans to assist in that cause. So I think the campaign momentum with respect to U.S. activities, all the plans that all the U.S. services have just recently completed for the Arctic strategy, as well as codifying plans on behalf of our allies and partners to assist, is very helpful.

Mrs. LURIA. Thank you. And can you clarify, are you looking for two additional destroyers to be permanently assigned to the EUCOM AOR [area of responsibility] or are you looking for rotational forces that would deploy from elsewhere on the east coast?

General WOLTERS. It is a request for permanent, ma'am.

Mrs. LURIA. Permanent. So then it wouldn't be two on station all the time, it will be a rotational force that is forward deployed to the European theater?

General WOLTERS. We currently have a set number of four and the request is for two additional and we have infrastructure in place to be able to house all six in Rota, Spain.

Mrs. LURIA. Okay. I understand that. So going back to the multiple combatant commanders who intersect in the Arctic theater. My question is about 2nd Fleet. So the Navy recently, you know, a few years back stood up 2nd Fleet again and when Admiral Richardson announced the re-establishment of 2nd Fleet, he said that this was a fleet that would operate seamlessly from the east coast of the United States to the Barents Sea. And that covers two theaters, so the NORTHCOM AOR and part of the EUCOM AOR. And then recently the *Harry S. Truman* operated above the Arctic Circle doing exercises and I understand that they were under USEUCOM command during that exercise.

Does the current arrangement with 2nd Fleet being a numbered fleet that spans two combatant command AORs, do you see any operational concerns with that arrangement?

General WOLTERS. We are very comfortable with that arrangement and it is done in other domains often. And 2nd Fleet coupled with JFC [Joint Force Command] Norfolk that I know you are familiar with Congresswoman, we've worked out the C2 relationships and supporting construct and I am very comfortable with the path that we are currently on.

Mrs. LURIA. Okay, and just with the little time remaining, other than the request for two additional DDGs, do you feel that you have received adequate naval presence in the EUCOM AOR to meet all of your missions on a regular basis?

General WOLTERS. We could still use some more support in undersea activity and I would adore the chance to talk to that in a separate venue.

Mrs. LURIA. Okay. Thank you. I yield back the time remaining.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Gaetz is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GAETZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I wanted to give our witnesses the opportunity to just discuss the importance of air dominance in Europe.

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I will take a stab at that because it is near and dear to my heart. It is a campaign imperative to ensure that we can comprehensively defend and share our responses and achieve effective deterrence in Europe. And it will dramatically improve with the addition of the United States F-35s that start coming in to the United Kingdom in the fall of 2021.

Mr. GAETZ. And I know that when we make decisions about air platforms, we are often analyzing the entourage effect, how the F-35 can make the rest of the fighting force more capable. As the F-35 starts to really take its position as the dominant air platform in Europe with our allies, can we expect that they will be able to scale and do more in their own defense as a consequence of that entourage effect that we seem to analyze very closely in our own fighting force?

General WOLTERS. Absolutely, Congressman. We have 81 F-35s in continent as we speak. We anticipate that we will get to 450 by 2030. The F-35's contribution at the tactical level and its ability to achieve access is unequaled to anywhere in the world, but its contributions at the strategic level for indications and warnings, command and control, and lethality from a mission command standpoint are daunting.

Mr. GAETZ. Obviously, the chairman mentioned we are all concerned about Turkey and their S-400 purchase. Is there another shoe that we expect to drop? Is there anything you picked up at the mil-to-mil level that should give us cause for concern that U.S. products, U.S. capabilities are diminished in the attractiveness to some of our partners?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I haven't. The mil-to-mil relationship that I have with Turkey at this moment remains very strong.

Mr. GAETZ. With any other of our partner nations, are there any places where you see that we might ought to give particular focus or attention when it comes to ensuring interoperability and capability with U.S. warfighters in Europe?

General WOLTERS. We work that every day, Congressman. I think that is a requirement 24/7/365 [24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year]. I think what we have done recently with respect to the codification of actual plans at the strategic level and at the national level is a forcing function to allow nations to ultimately establish requirements. And that in itself has been very, very helpful so that we don't have unnecessary duplicity and the alignment of our hardware and software and troopers is what it needs to be to better generate peace. I think we are traversing in the right direction. And truthfully, Congressman, a big contributor

in this area has been the Europe Deterrence Initiative to get after these issues.

Mr. GAETZ. I appreciate that. I just would give you a chance if you thought there was any other area where we ought to have this focus because I know in Armed Services, we had a number of discussions about Turkey's decision before it arose and maybe we should have done more to ensure that that was the right decision. But it seems as though you are saying there is not something with that level of acuity that we ought to be concerned about. If there is, I would ask that you provide that to our office as part of the record.

I thank the chairman, and I yield back.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 99.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Ms. Jacobs is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACOBS. Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you to the witnesses for being here.

We are currently seeing a rise in illiberal and authoritarian states throughout Europe. I know there has been a lot of talk about Turkey, but we also have seen authoritarian cases in Poland and Hungary and some of these governments are no longer being reliable or helpful partners. I know we have already talked about the F-35 program with Turkey.

But Ms. Cooper, I was wondering in your assessment, how does the Biden administration plan to update its military partnerships for alliances with states that take repeated actions that go directly against our core interests and are these authoritarian developments being considered as the Department works to implement its plan to realign the force posture in Europe?

I am particularly interested in Poland where we have our rotating armored brigade combat team.

Ms. COOPER. Thank you. I would say that the Biden administration's policies regarding democracy and regarding the promotion of U.S. values are very strong. And so this is something that we feel not just over at the State Department and Foggy Bottom, but at the Pentagon. So in general, this is an important focus for the administration.

With respect to specific alliance relationships, we are still working very hard in the context of the NATO alliance to forge strong capabilities and a strong ability to deter Russian aggression and respond should Russia proceed with aggression. And that is where our NATO-related mil-to-mil investments occur. And in the case of Poland specifically, we do have this rotational presence that we are continuing with.

Ms. JACOBS. Thank you. And on the question of Russia, the question for both Ms. Cooper and General Wolters is why you think sanctions are going to work on Russia since we have put them on in the past and it has not been effective in deterring Russian hacking. If anything, the problem has gotten worse.

And I understand if we need to go into more detail in the classified briefing later, but just wondering what the rationale is for continuing a process of sanctions that seemed to me, at least, fairly ineffective to this point.

Ms. COOPER. Thank you, Congresswoman. I would urge Members of Congress to take a close look at the specific sanctions that we are releasing today because the details in the package, I think, do speak to a level of clarity of purpose and clarity of messaging that perhaps we have not always had.

In terms of the new Executive order that President Biden is signing, this will enable us to have a tool that we can use not just today, but also in the future to message our deterrence of future Russian malign activities, so I do think it is important to look at the specifics.

But it is not just sanctions. I mean we are not just doing sanctions and it is coupled with other measures to include today we are proceeding with the expulsion of 10 Russian officers in the United States. And most importantly, it revolves around alliance unity. I was very encouraged to see that it wasn't just the voice of the United States today calling out Russian malign actions. It was also NATO, because we have a NATO statement that was issued today. So we are all standing together unified. This is something that Russia does notice and that can, I think, in the future deter their malign behavior.

Ms. JACOBS. Thank you. General, anything to add there?

General WOLTERS. Congresswoman, anything we can do to continue to curb malign behavior on behalf of Russia and improve our deterrence posture, I am in support of.

Ms. JACOBS. Thank you. And with that, Mr. Chair, I will yield back my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Bacon is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACON. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate you both being here and as a 30-year Air Force guy, I am real proud of General Wolters and all the great work you are doing.

My first question is dealing with the Baltics. With what we are seeing with what the Russians are doing with Ukraine and Georgia, what can we do more to assure deterrence with our great allies in the Baltics? And part of that, would you consider having a permanent U.S. force in the Baltics to make that deterrence more assured? And I defer to either one.

General WOLTERS. Sir, great question. Number one, I think the glide path that we are on with enhanced forward presence has been very successful. And I know you are familiar with it and I know you visited. It affords the NATO nations to lead from the front and participate to a greater degree.

I believe that the current rotational presence that we have back and forth from a U.S. perspective with respect to Poland and what we do with the other nations, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, is about right. It continues to promote all involvement for many of our allies and partners and the success that we are having with those battalion-sized battle groups in each one of those four nations possessing the capability to inherit and input all-domain data is improving our ability to adequately deter in that region.

Mr. BACON. I am the co-chair of the Baltic Security Caucus, so we put a lot of time on this. I just fear, if we ever have conflict in Europe it is going to probably evolve around the Baltic States, so I just think we have to be so careful to ensure there is no mis-

calculation by the Russians there. So obviously I am for strengthening our deterrence capabilities there and leaving any ambiguity out when it comes to that.

To the Russian gas question, there are some bases that are reliant on Russian gas. And the reason I know that, we put it in law that services have to ask for a waiver to do it and we know the Army has done that. So for example, the new hospital being built in Germany will be using Russian gas.

Does it concern either one of you or what we can do about this? Because I think it is when the Russians can just turn off the gas, we have got a problem.

General WOLTERS. It does, Congressman, and I am very familiar with Rhine Ordnance Barracks Hospital and the construction project, having commanded the air component at Ramstein being part and parcel to that equation.

I think we have to continue with the demanding customer that we have been up to this point to purge it out of the system and our reliance on that should ultimately be a campaign that drives this to zero.

Mr. BACON. I know you have already talked to some F-35 questions here, but I have got to follow up on it. I was just reading that some of the training, we are looking at 20 to 1 kill ratios. I even saw one where it was 100 to 1.

Would you say the F-35 is unmatched in its capability in your theater?

General WOLTERS. Yes.

Mr. BACON. Now there have been some folks who want to cut the F-35 program. What is the impact to your theater if the F-35 program is reduced in production?

General WOLTERS. It will reduce our campaign momentum to more effectively see the environment from an indications and warning standpoint, command and control, and provide feedback as to what is taking place in the environment.

And from a lethality perspective, the ability to put potential targets at risk will be weakened.

Mr. BACON. Have you flown in the F-35?

General WOLTERS. I have flown the F-22. I have not flown the F-35.

Mr. BACON. I was just curious because you can compare and contrast it perhaps if you had.

I have got a minute left, so I want to ask one other question on electronic warfare. Four years ago, we took stock over electronic warfare. We were behind Russia and China. We stepped away from it in the mid-90s. We put a lot of emphasis in this committee on trying to get this on track.

Are you seeing the work bearing fruit over the last 4 years? Are we rightsizing our electronic warfare program?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, we are improving, probably not at a rate that pleases you or I. And the acquisition and the proliferation of the F-35 will actually help in that arena.

Mr. BACON. Thank you. I yield back and I appreciate you both.

The CHAIRMAN. I do apologize for this, but I'm going to use the chair's prerogative to follow up a little bit.

What impact, I mean the F-35, \$38,000 an hour. Right now, we wanted to get it at \$25,000 an hour. Its mission-ready capability is sub 50 percent at the moment and by 2030, the engine is requiring so much repairs that roughly half the fleet won't be able to go just because we don't have the facilities to repair the engines because we won't have enough engines.

If that is the capability that you are getting, \$38,000 an hour, 33 percent to 40 percent capability rate, sinking down because it doesn't have a functioning engine, how will that impact your ability to do what you need to do in Europe?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, that will certainly have an impact. We weigh it all together given what effect can be delivered in the battlespace, but obviously it would have an impact.

The CHAIRMAN. So it would be helpful if this committee would put pressure on those making the F-35 to actually deliver the product that they told us they were going to deliver at the price that they told us that they were going to deliver it at. And it would not be helpful to simply give them a free pass on those important issues.

General WOLTERS. Chairman, I applaud your efforts up to this point in that category and I don't argue with any of those points.

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate that. That was more rhetorical than anything, but that is what I hope this committee will do. The platform is fantastic. There isn't any question about that. We are right now not getting what we are paying for and that is not good for defense and it certainly isn't good for the taxpayer.

With that, I will yield to Ms. Strickland for 5 minutes.

Ms. STRICKLAND. Thank you, Chairman Smith. I would like to talk a bit about protecting service members and their families when they are deployed, especially given how the Kremlin and other adversaries are targeting them with misinformation and disinformation.

So I understand that when service members are deployed in EUCOM's AOR, the Russian disinformation campaigns are especially interested in service members and their families. Can you discuss, as much as you can in this open setting, what EUCOM is doing to combat disinformation, how we are educating service members, and how we are improving their awareness of this possibility? Thank you.

General WOLTERS. Thanks, Congresswoman. That is a great question. Again, we have instituted programs with the assistance of Special Operations Command that start at the very top of the strategic level to go after malign influence and misinformation to Active Duty members, reservists, guardsmen, and their dependents.

The operations influence platform is specifically designed to target misinformation at the strategic and operational levels from Russia. And we have got a follow-on program called WebOps that takes it even further to make sure that there is a heightened awareness on behalf of all of the military members and the dependents in the EUCOM AOR about the malign influence from the information domain with respect to Russia.

Ms. STRICKLAND. Thank you. Ms. Cooper.



Ms. COOPER. Well, I can just add to this at the strategic level in terms of the whole-of-government effort that we have to counter Russian disinformation. And actually, this is something that General Wolters plays a leadership role in because he is the co-chair with the State Department of the Russia Influence Group. And so even as we are dealing with these issues at the local level, at the installation level, at the individual level, at the strategic level our focus is on improving whole-of-government coordination to address Russia disinformation.

Ms. STRICKLAND. Right, and can you talk a bit more about the families because sometimes they can be vulnerable, especially when their loved ones are deployed?

General WOLTERS. We have had the luxury of hosting families in Europe for decades and decades and this is a constant challenge just to make sure that the military members conduct town hall meetings at the commander level and the lower levels to ensure that there is no degree of satisfaction when just the military member is informed. The mission isn't completed until the rest of the family members are. And we obviously use 21st century means to get that word out.

But it is like anything, Congresswoman, you have to rebrief the same subject about 10 times to convince yourself that the word is actually out and we find ourselves in situations to where we have to be comprehensive from a town hall perspective to make sure that we can go person-to-person to get the word and it has been a little bit challenging as a result of COVID-19 conditions and I think this is driving a lot of your questions. And we have worked very hard to conduct town hall meetings with restrictions applied from a COVID perspective and are having success.

Ms. STRICKLAND. Well, great. Thank you for that. And we know that, in general, messages start the thinking when we do repeat them, so I appreciate your repetition strategy. That is all I have. I yield back my time, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Waltz is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I don't think your microphone is on.

Mr. WALTZ. How are we doing now? There we are. All right.

Thank you for both being here. I want to talk to you about our European partners', our NATO partners' significant contributions to Afghanistan over the last couple of decades. And Ms. Cooper and I have spent many, many efforts working with them to live up to those contributions and live up to those pledges and fortunately, actually, had more troops on the ground than the United States until the announcement yesterday.

I am hearing from many of my colleagues and then also reading about grumbling and discontent and concern, frankly, from—particularly from the Czechs, the Belgians, some of the Eastern European states and those that were affected so directly by the precipitous pullout of Iraq when ISIS [the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria] then came charging to the fore. We had a caliphate the size of Indiana, attacks into and around Europe and the European capitals.

The intelligence community has been clear that terrorism loves a vacuum. Al-Qaida is very likely to take advantage of that vacuum

in the wake of our withdrawal. What are you hearing from a military standpoint and also to your military-to-military contacts on the civilian side? Are those concerns mirroring what I am hearing in terms of Europe's safety, number one, but then number two, our ability to effect a CT [counterterrorism] fight over, when this term over the horizon noting the differences, our basing options in and around Iraq are very different and far greater than they are without Bagram in Afghanistan?

General WOLTERS. First and foremost, Congressman, and I know you appreciate this. As the United States, we are incredibly grateful for the contributions of all the nations. And secondly, with this being an order, we will conduct a deliberate, very well synchronized, and very safe, from a force protection standpoint, withdrawal.

Yesterday, as you may have heard, at the North Atlantic Council, the Secretary General convened all of the members of the alliance to include the partner nations that have an impact in the region and the support was resounding for enactment of the withdrawal.

Ms. COOPER. And Congressman, I would just add that kind of at the policy level, for the feedback that I have heard from my colleagues who have been traveling with the Secretary and were there in Brussels for this meeting is a sense of appreciation by allies for the manner in which we have consulted with them since the beginning of this administration to take into account their perspectives, to have Secretary Austin and Secretary Biden personally engaging with them in person. And also, the sense that they also have been reflecting on the way ahead and concerned about the future of the mission even before this. And I think moving forward—

Mr. WALTZ. So Ms. Cooper, yes, go ahead. That is the part I want to talk about, moving forward.

Ms. COOPER. I think moving forward, the expectation—and I think it is an expectation that we will absolutely meet—is for this very close consultation process to continue every step of the way so that we are working on this with all plans and we are executing it absolutely together as an alliance.

Mr. WALTZ. Our European partners will be the first to feel the consequences of this decision, if history bears true in what they felt with the withdrawal of Iraq and the ISIS caliphate. So I certainly hope those consultations are ongoing, but I do not see a plan in place and basing options for continuing the counterterrorism operations. Are the Europeans planning to participate in those operations with us as they have in Syria? What is the plan?

General WOLTERS. We will start and conduct a synchronized withdrawal and the intention of the European nations is obviously by, with, and through those nations to be determined.

Mr. WALTZ. Okay, so the plan is TBD, to be determined. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Veasey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. General Wolters, can you talk a little bit about Russia's military modernization program and what modernization efforts are most important for us to focus on to reduce operational risk in your command?

General WOLTERS. The one that is of most concern, Congressman, is the long-range missile capability. And we at NATO are very focused on that. We certainly from a U.S. perspective are focused on that. And the key for us is to continue to improve our ability from an indications and warnings standpoint and from a command and control standpoint to make sure that we can characterize the environment and be able to respond. That is probably the biggest concern, Congressman.

Mr. VEASEY. Thank you very much. Last week, I was at a rollout ceremony in Fort Worth with the Danish military receiving F-35s and as you know, they are obviously one of our key allies and participants in the F-35 program. And I was just wondering what was your opinion on the F-35s and the impact that it has had both militarily and diplomatically with our allies in the region?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, we are very fond of the F-35 because of its contributions to indications and warnings, and command and control, and lethality. The nations in Europe have been very happy with the product. We actually have just over 80 F-35s, non-U.S., in Europe as we speak. And we will soon get U.S. F-35s to the United Kingdom in the fall timeframe. And we are currently programmed to go up to approximately 450 F-35s by 2030 throughout all of Europe. We are very pleased with its performance and we are very pleased with its contributions to deterrence.

Mr. VEASEY. And I hate to ask you to go back too far into the history vault, but with other platforms where there have been issues, and that the military has had to work with to perfect, whether it has been a plane, a helicopter, you know, battleship, regardless of what it is, for the mission that you need for F-35s to perform for you right now, and you go back and you look at other platforms where you have also had to work with them until they could, you know, perform at the rate that you wanted them to, where do you see this platform at right now versus, again, just other problems in the past that you had to correct?

I mean I remember when I was at the beginning of the V-22, for instance, that there were some serious issues with that. But Bell Helicopter eventually got that right and it has gone on to become a good platform for the Marines and other branches. And so could you just sort of touch on that a little bit?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, the other platforms that I have seen during my service in the military, we have had the same experiences. And if I were to rate the F-35 with others, I would just tell you that they are similar.

Mr. VEASEY. Okay, well, thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Ms. Bice is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BICE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The questions I have may be better served in the classified hearing, but I'll go ahead and just throw them out there now. I really want to hear, we've talked a lot about the F-35, and, certainly, I can maybe ask some additional questions, but I really would like to know about how you were battling the cyber issues that are happening with our adversaries, especially as it relates to what is happening in that part of the region.

General WOLTERS. Congresswoman, I think the question had to do with malign influence on behalf of adversaries with respect to cyber; is that correct?

Mrs. BICE. That is correct.

General WOLTERS. I'll just start out by saying that the posture in Europe has improved significantly. As far as the organizations that we have, from a USEUCOM perspective, we have a Joint Cyber Center; I have an integrated planning element; and with my SACEUR [Supreme Allied Commander Europe] hat, I have a SHAPE [Supreme Headquarters Allied Partners Europe] Cyber Operations Center. And those three organizations come to a total of about 150 individuals.

On top of that, that we have cyber protection teams in the United States manned by the United States Army at Fort Gordon. And many of the nations in Europe today are forming cyber organizations from a military perspective. And I believe that because several years ago the United States made the decision to establish one military commander for cyber, the USCYBERCOM [United States Cyber Command] commander, our direction and guidance has been much clearer with much less ambiguity, and the command and control and the organization of our units is much better.

So we're improving, and the NATO nations are watching that improvement and they are following in suit, and we are seeing a marked good improvement on behalf of our NATO militaries to improve our effectiveness, number one to better defend our network and then, number two, worry about the other aspects of cyber after that, once they're convinced that their nations and their militaries and their whole of governments have an effective network defense.

Ms. COOPER. And if I may, I think it might be helpful to offer a national level perspective on this cyber question, and I think the SolarWinds response that we announced today is really a microcosm of how we handle cyber issues at the national level.

There's a piece of this that relates to specifically disrupting and imposing costs on Russian cyber actors, so what you're seeing today is that we are sanctioning six specific Russian companies that support the Russian intelligence service. This is the SVR. So we're actually sanctioning these specific companies.

Then you also see an element of this that relates to raising awareness and providing the private sector with the information and tools they need to be able to protect themselves, so there's an aspect of that with the SolarWinds response. And then there's building partner capacity piece where we're working with our allies and partners to help them become more resilient, and we have expanded our own Cyber Flag exercise that is one of our premier cyber exercises to include several allies as part of this response.

Mrs. BICE. And a follow-up to that. Do you feel like it would be in our best interest to invest more in this specific space to help mitigate some of the [inaudible].

Ms. COOPER. I would say this is, again, this is a whole-of-government space, so I think we have to be looking at not just the Defense Department but at our civilian agency counterparts and their investments in this space.

And then it's also about the private sector. We have to partner with the private sector, we have to share information with the pri-

vate sector, and we also have to encourage the private sector to make themselves more resilient. That's also why today we are reaching out to the private sector and encouraging U.S. and international companies to not rely on Russian software providers, Russian IT [information technology] companies, because this can lead to a critical vulnerability.

Mrs. BICE. We may want to add China to that, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. We have four people left and 10 minutes. The math doesn't quite add up, but if those four people move through quickly, we hopefully will be able to get to all four. But we do have to stop at 1:20.

With that announcement, Mr. Panetta is recognized.

Mr. PANETTA. Great. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that. And thanks to our witnesses for being here and, of course, your service.

Look, in November of 2020, I got to say I and a number of other of my colleagues were absolutely disappointed by the withdrawal of the United States from the Open Skies Treaty, which, basically, we saw the consequences of Russia withdrawing, as well. I think some of the best examples of the benefits of the Open Skies Treaty were in 2014 when we were able to confirm the deployment of thousands of troops, Russian troops, near the Ukrainian border, as well as in 2018 when we conducted a flight following the unprovoked Russian attack of Ukrainian vessels in the Kerch Strait.

I do believe that the treaty is worth it based not only on the images but to the value that our allies have in it, especially our Eastern European partners and friends. That's why I introduced the Open Skies Stability Act to let our allies know that we in Congress felt that way about the Open Skies Treaty and the value that it brings to the stability and peace, especially in Europe.

My question to you is what do you feel the future is of the Open Skies Treaty for the remaining 32 members, and does it serve a purpose without the participation of the United States and Russia?

Ms. COOPER. I will attempt to answer this quickly, Congressman, given the time, but this is actually a very complex subject. And since it was actually my office that led the charge on that flight that you mentioned over Ukraine after the Kerch Strait attack, this is near and dear to my heart.

What I will say to you is that, first of all, we have been very open to consultations with allies and partners on the range of conventional arms control requirements and concerns, to include the Open Skies Treaty, and we have, the Biden administration has reached out to allies to open this dialogue as the administration considers the way forward on all arms control agreements. So I think that's very important to note, and I think that's something that allies have appreciated.

I will say, though, that, from an intelligence value, the Open Skies Treaty does have very limited intelligence value for the United States. And even in that instance that I was very proud of actually where we had that imagery following the Kerch Strait attack, we haven't necessarily been able to capitalize on the benefits of those opportunities.

So at this point, you know, we are in consultation with allies. We know that Russia values flying over the U.S. homeland as part of the treaty, and I certainly can't speak to whether Russia would actually come back into compliance, which is really the core issue here. Russia has given us no indication that it would be willing to come back into compliance.

Mr. PANETTA. General Wolters.

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I concur with Laura Cooper's comments on the consultation with allies, and I've received the same reflections. Thank you.

Mr. PANETTA. Fair enough. Knowing that, I yield the remainder of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Franklin is recognized.

Mr. FRANKLIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to our witnesses here this morning. You covered a lot of ground on the UNCLASS [unclassified] level, and I do have some things I want to dive into deeper.

But just quickly for General Wolters, we haven't discussed sealift, strategic sealift. It's often an area that gets overlooked. But could you talk a little bit about the role strategic sealift plays in our efforts to deter Russia, an assessment of our capabilities, and do we have the tools necessary for you to implement strategy in EUCOM AOR.

General WOLTERS. We do, Congressman. But it relies on advanced warning, and, as you know, our TRANSCOM [United States Transportation Command] commander works these issues every second of the day. We were able to test sealift to a certain degree with Defender-Europe 20. We didn't get the full, complete test.

We certainly have some challenges. But when we have good indications and warnings, and we can move our operations farther and farther to the left of supply, we can typically wind up putting ourselves in the position to where we can put resources where they need to be to be effective. And right now, for what is required on the European continent, we can be effective.

General WOLTERS. Very good. Thank you General. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Garamendi.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, very, very good witnesses. Thank you for the testimony. Ms. Cooper, thank you. Particularly delighted to see the sanctions coming at a very, very important moment having to do with Ukraine and other things that Russia up to now, let alone what they've been doing in the past, a very good message.

My recollection is that every year or every other year the Russians do an exercise in the western part of their country, north one year, south the next year. This is the south year?

General WOLTERS. It is, Congressman.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Okay. I want to—I don't expect an answer now, but I want in detail because of the work that we need to do in the NDAA [National Defense Authorization Act], the posture in Europe with regard to EDI and the specific MILCON [military construction] and other issues. Some \$1.7 billion was removed last year and the year before in that area. Do we replace it or not? It's a long answer, and I'll take it in—yes, General.

General WOLTERS. Thirty-six projects at \$1.6 billion, and we're working very, very hard to execute 34 of the 36, but, obviously, it depends on future budget. We're on course to go that direction.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Very good. We need the details.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 99.]

Mr. GARAMENDI. Also, President Trump said he was going to move a whole lot of things out of Europe and into Europe and other places. Has that been reversed? If so, what do we do and where does the future go? Ms. Cooper.

Ms. COOPER. Thank you very much, Congressman. I will just say that, on posture in general, there is the global posture review that is kicking off right now in the Pentagon. And so we will be studying all of these issues, global posture, and this summer we will have the Biden administration's conclusions. But with respect specifically to Europe, President Biden did lift the troop cap. In Germany, he announced that at the Munich Security Conference. And then we were talking earlier today about the 500 additional forces that Secretary Austin just announced for Germany.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I understand there are many other things also in play, so your timing doesn't quite work out with our timing. So let's coordinate our timing with regard to these issues.

Finally, the issue of NATO, it appears as though there is a sea change from disrespecting NATO to respecting NATO and working with NATO; is that correct?

Ms. COOPER. The Biden administration has been very clear that NATO and alliances are central to its policy. And I think our allies have responded very appreciatively.

Mr. GARAMENDI. General, would you like to comment?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, I've seen no breakdown in trust of our NATO nations with the United States.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you very much. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Wilson is recognized.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And, General Wolters, it's an honor to be with you, and I particularly appreciate it. I'm the grateful son of a Flying Tiger who served in India and China during World War II, and I know the difference you can make on behalf of promoting freedom and liberty.

Additionally, I'm very grateful that I had led a delegation, General, to Poland in 2017. I was there with, gratefully, with Congressman Garamendi. And in Poland visiting with our personnel in Operation Atlantic Resolve, it's been so inspiring. And that has a personal connection, too. My daughter-in-law, Jennifer Miskowicz, her heritage is Krakow, Poland. And so to see us working together with our Polish allies, how important it is.

And what is the most recent progress that has been made with the joint declaration that we have with our headquarters and possibly to have a headquarters unit in Poland?

General WOLTERS. Congressman, all those efforts with the enhanced defense cooperation agreement with Poland are in work. We've received tremendous contributions from Poland with respect to working some of our construction projects, and we're very excited about the status of the V Corps command post coming in and Poland's willingness to work on their infrastructure to receive our ro-

tational forces and the improvements that they've made on their ranges.

So we are traversing in a very good direction with Poland.

Mr. WILSON. Well, it's so inspiring to be there and visit with our Polish allies.

For Secretary Cooper, I'm so pleased with the Biden administration indicating a clear association with our allies of Ukraine and also Moldova. Additionally, Poland, Georgia, working with Romania and Bulgaria. I appreciate the President's restatement of our appreciation in all of these countries.

And with that, what can we do to be more effective in our working with our allies of Eastern Europe?

Ms. COOPER. Congressman, I think that we are on the right track to work with our allies, both to build their capacity to be able to be resilient against their near threat, Russia, but also to be interoperable with U.S. forces and with NATO.

So I feel like we have the right mix of train-and-equip programs. We also need to be vocal in our support of them. Right now, with the pressure the Ukraine is facing, Ukraine has really appreciated not just the fact that we're providing them with tremendous high-quality equipment and high-quality training but the fact that we're publicly vocal in our support of their sovereignty.

Mr. WILSON. Well, thank you for your efforts. And it's been inspiring to visit Novo Selo, the joint NATO Bulgarian-American base. It's exciting to see our allies working together. Thank you for your service. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. We are a couple of minutes over time here, and we've got to get over for the classified briefing. So I just want to close with one quick thing, and that is I really want to thank the staff. You know, we've made a couple of jokes about the technological issues here. It's not easy, and the staff has really made this work in a way that has been enormously helpful. So I really appreciate the technological wizards who have enabled us to continue to do the hybrid hearings the way we've done them and appreciate you sitting through all that. And we'll give you just a brief little break before we reconvene at 2:00 in the CVC.

With that, we are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:21 p.m., the subcommittee proceeded in closed session.]



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# **A P P E N D I X**

APRIL 15, 2021

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**PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD**

APRIL 15, 2021

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Statement by  
Laura K. Cooper  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia, Ukraine, Eurasia  
Office of the Secretary of Defense

Before the 117th Congress  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States House of Representatives  
April 15, 2021

**Introduction**

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Rogers, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on policy matters related to the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) area of responsibility. I would like to express my appreciation for the continued support from Congress, and this Committee, in shaping and resourcing the Department of Defense's efforts in this region. It is an honor to appear beside General Wolters, an outstanding partner.

Today I will highlight the most important foundation of all Department of Defense efforts in this theater – our Alliances. Then, I will describe our strategic approach to Europe, the importance of NATO, and capability issues of note, followed by a narrative assessing regional threats and challenges.

**The Department's Approach to Strategic Competition**

The United States' greatest strategic asset is our Alliances. For decades, alongside our European Allies and partners, we led and sustained a stable, open, and rules-based international system. Allies stood by our side against common threats and adversaries and helped advance our shared interests and values. Today, the global landscape is changing. A range of threats that do not respect borders, coupled with a redistribution of power, challenge the rules-based international order. To compete in this new landscape, the Department of Defense is heeding the call of the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance and engaging our transatlantic friends with renewed vigor, reclaiming our place in international institutions, and revitalizing America's unmatched network of allies and partners.

On numerous occasions, President Biden and Secretary Austin have stated that the transatlantic alliance is the essential forum for consultation, decision, and action, and the

foundation on which our collective security and our shared prosperity are built.

As strategic competitors continue to invest heavily in efforts to check U.S. strengths and prevent us from defending our interests, the Department of Defense is leaning forward and engaging with Europe and Israel. We are harnessing our network of allies and partners to deter aggression from China and Russia, to contend with persistent threats from North Korea, Iran, and terrorist groups, and to adapt to emerging challenges like cyber threats, climate change, and digital authoritarianism. We are consulting with key Allies, such as the UK, France, Germany, and Italy, on shared global challenges that threaten the rules-based international order, including disinformation, malign cyber activity, attempts to restrict access to maritime, space, and cyber domains, and actions that weaken multilateral institutions and treaties that for decades have underpinned our security and prosperity. At NATO, we are working more effectively with Allies to ensure military readiness and enhance a combat-credible deterrent across the transatlantic community. We are prioritizing efforts to build the capacity, and support the Euro-Atlantic aspirations, of Ukraine and Georgia, strategic partners on the frontline of Russian aggression, as we continue to monitor closely Russia's provocative actions in the region. And we will continue to forward-deploy forces to bolster the Alliance's deterrence and defense posture. To this end, the Secretary of Defense is conducting a comprehensive Department-wide global posture review to ensure alignment of U.S. overseas force presence with Presidential national security priorities. In this increasingly competitive environment, our security remains grounded in a free and prosperous Europe, and a credible and strong NATO.

**The Department's Strategic Approach to Europe**

The Department is reinvigorating our alliances and partnerships to bolster our military advantage in Europe. With a realistic understanding of the threat, we continue to expand our

access, basing, and overflight agreements. Dynamic Force Employment and a robust exercise program with allies and partners improve interoperability and demonstrate a strong commitment to collective defense. To assess our strategic readiness, we are also conducting the DEFENDER exercise series and other multi-domain exercises in the European theater of operation. Additionally, our access and basing agreements allow forward positioning of equipment, munitions, and materiel. They also enable rapid transition of forces to the front lines, ease strategic air and sea lift requirements for units deploying from the United States, and reassure allies and partners while deterring adversaries.

We are working to improve the resilience of front-line states, especially Ukraine and Georgia, our strategic partners facing Russian aggression. The Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative is a key component of U.S. efforts to strengthen the capacity of Ukraine's forces to preserve the country's territorial integrity, continue building NATO interoperability, and implement defense sector reforms. As a result of intensified conflict in the South Caucasus last year, Russia now has ground forces in all three South Caucasus countries -- strengthening a strong influence in the region.

Bipartisan, bicameral support of the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) and the Baltic Security Initiative (BSI) are also key components in ensuring U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) can confront the challenges in deterring aggression and retaining long-term advantages. The EDI provides one of the primary funding sources for USEUCOM to adjust posture in response to the changing security environment, support rotational force deployments, make infrastructure investments, and deliver needed capabilities in key locations throughout Europe. The BSI specifically enables our Baltic Allies to address shared national security threats by augmenting Baltic national funding for capability gaps and modernization. Any additional



funds, including those under the EDI, the BSI, or other appropriations, will allow the Department to expand efforts to invest in programs and further bolster NATO's ability to respond decisively to potential Russian aggression.

**Importance of NATO and European Partners**

NATO, and Europe, are vital to U.S. strategy. NATO's most important task is to deter aggression against its members and to be ready to fight and win should deterrence fail. To that end, all NATO Allies share in the responsibility to procure, prepare, and provide the ready and interoperable forces and capabilities necessary to present a credible deterrence. By engaging in baseline peacetime activities, and through the European Deterrence and NATO Readiness Initiatives, the United States continues to strengthen our collective deterrence and defense in step with our European Allies.

We are continuously engaging with NATO Allies, through NATO and bilaterally, to ensure that NATO is prepared for modern challenges and is able to deter aggression from any adversary. Allies have made considerable progress on the "three c's" of responsibility sharing: cash, contributions, and capabilities.

Although we are encouraged by the fact that we are now in our seventh year of steady NATO defense spending increases by our Allies, and we expect this trend to continue, we continue to encourage our NATO Allies strongly to increase their defense budgets, increase their procurement of needed capabilities, and increase their contributions to NATO operations. Having capabilities and contributions tomorrow depends on devoting cash today. Allies are answering the call for greater investment. Between 2016 and 2020, non-U.S. investment increased by more than \$130 billion. The accumulated increase in defense spending by the end of 2024 is projected to be \$400 billion. Although the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting

economic strength, NATO Allies remain committed to addressing the security threats that have not diminished.

Allies have been reassured by Secretary Austin's consistent messaging on Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. The U.S. commitment remains ironclad, and the United States will continue to be a reliable security partner committed to the transatlantic bond. We will continue to work with NATO Allies to share responsibilities equitably and invest in our comparative advantages to ensure NATO's deterrence and defense posture is fit to meet the security challenges facing the Alliance. The Department continues to prioritize working with NATO Allies to improve their readiness, increase allied speed of decision making, and to improve military mobility across Europe.

In addition to regular engagement with our NATO Allies, the Department continues to pursue, and emphasize, close coordination between NATO and the European Union (EU). One area of particular importance in this coordination is military mobility. The ability to move forces seamlessly across Europe is a flagship of NATO-EU cooperation, with similar endeavors focusing on resilience and other areas of mutual interest. There are ongoing NATO and EU efforts to defend against Russian hybrid efforts and to ensure European societies and infrastructure are ready and able to support NATO operations on the continent should they be necessary. We remain supportive of EU efforts to develop a host of its own defense initiatives, but the EU must not duplicate, and should complement, NATO's intended efforts, and should also remain transparent and open to non-EU NATO Allies to maximize our ability to deter common adversaries effectively.

#### **Nuclear Deterrence**

NATO's commitment to deterring nuclear attack against the Alliance remains a backstop

of transatlantic security. The fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capabilities is to preserve peace, prevent coercion, and deter aggression. The United States continues to make available its strategic nuclear forces for the defense of NATO, and they are the supreme guarantee of the security of NATO Allies. The independent strategic nuclear forces of the United Kingdom and France have a deterrent role of their own and contribute significantly to the overall security of the Alliance. In addition to strategic forces, the United States continues to forward-deploy nuclear weapons to Europe. These weapons, combined with U.S. and Allied dual-capable aircraft and supporting infrastructure, tangibly demonstrate Alliance cohesion and resolve through an equitable and sustainable distribution of roles, responsibilities, and burdens. The presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in NATO countries for the last 50 years have contributed to the successful deterrence of aggression against the Alliance, continue to backstop our conventional deterrent, and provide an essential political and military link between Europe and North America. As Secretary Austin has attested, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance as long as nuclear weapons exist.

#### **Missile Defense**

Missile defense is another critical capability where continued investments in Europe demonstrate the United States' enduring commitment to transatlantic security. Missile defense plays a critical role in NATO's defense of Europe from coercion and aggression. Interoperable NATO missile defense systems will improve the Alliance's collective defense capabilities and strengthen our own security.

The Department is committed to completing the deployment of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), which is the U.S. contribution to NATO ballistic missile defense and will expand defensive coverage against medium- and intermediate-range ballistic missile

threats from the Middle East. The EPAA includes an AN/TPY-2 radar located in Turkey, BMD-capable destroyers homeported in Rota, Spain, the first operational Aegis Ashore system in Romania, and an Aegis Ashore system in Poland that is under construction.

In addition to these EPAA capabilities, individual NATO Allies are also fielding national air and missile defense systems designed to defend against shorter-range ballistic and cruise missiles. These active defenses will play a crucial role in countering missile strikes that underpin potential adversaries' anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) operations to limit U.S. power projection through missile attacks on U.S. forces, allies, and critical in-theater infrastructure.

#### **Arms Control**

Russia's repeated misinformation, disinformation, and diplomatic campaign concerning its numerous violations of multiple treaties and political commitments over the years underscores its short-term national interest-centered approach to arms control, in contrast with the norms-building approach favored by many Western states. We recognize the reality that the relationship with Russia remains challenging, but reducing the risks of an arms race is crucial to our national security. Extending the New START Treaty is one example of where the United States and Russia found mutual interest in maintaining verifiable limits on their respective strategic nuclear arsenals. This Administration's decision to extend the New START Treaty was in the national security interest of the United States, and is only the beginning of U.S. efforts to engage Russia and other countries to reduce nuclear threats. As directed by President Biden, the United States will explore strategic stability discussions with Russia on a range of arms control and emerging security issues. We also recognize a second reality. If the United States does not make the investments necessary to field a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent beyond the service lives of its existing nuclear forces, Russia and other competitors will have little incentive

to engage in meaningful and effective arms control negotiations. Based historical experience, the United States has the best chance of achieving its goals in arms control negotiations when our negotiating partners see a U.S. commitment to nuclear modernization in the budget. In short, leverage still matters, and a modernizing U.S. nuclear force provides the best chance to incentivize Russia, and eventually others, to participate productively in future negotiations.

### **Russia**

Russia has chosen to become an enduring and increasingly aggressive adversary that continues to be a primary security challenge for the United States and Europe. The Kremlin regime's core security interests remain inimical to those of the United States, and Russia is likely to threaten our interests for the foreseeable future as it continues its attempts to dominate the other sovereign states in the region and to assert itself as a global power broker.

Moscow is clear about its intent to shape a new world order more favorable to its interests and consistent with its authoritarian model. It has demonstrated its flagrant disregard for international law by infringing on the sovereignty of other states, including our own, often in the form of election interference and social media manipulation in attempts to sow disunion and mistrust. Russia has adopted a full-spectrum approach, including "hybrid" and malign influence activities, to advance its interests with the goal of avoiding a military response. It also has used military force and other acts of coercion to achieve its foreign policy objectives and to intimidate other sovereign states. In violation of international law, Russia has used chemical weapons to poison dissidents at home and abroad.

Russia continues an investment strategy designed to expand and modify its conventional and nuclear forces to offset NATO and U.S. conventional military advantages and missile defense programs. This includes fielding nuclear-armed intercontinental hypersonic weapons

and approximately two-thousand non-strategic nuclear weapons, including dual-capable sea- and land-based cruise missiles. Its nuclear arsenal is purposeful in its design and backs a military doctrine that emphasizes the coercive military value of nuclear weapons, including limited nuclear first-use in a regional conflict. Additionally, we can expect Russia to use its nuclear capabilities to deter potential forceful response to its activities in the grey zone. And although the prospects of a war with Russia are still low, we are likely to face Russian systems and methods of warfare as Russia proliferates military capabilities to others.

Russia is also working to integrate devastating operations in space and cyberspace into its plans to undermine NATO's advantages. Russia has already demonstrated its potent cyber capabilities against U.S., allied, and partner targets. Although the Russian Government publicly claims it does not intend to weaponize space, it blatantly continues to modernize develop and test its space-based and ground-based weapons intended to disrupt U.S. command and control, communications, and intelligence capabilities that provide force-multiplying effects in every domain. In the space and cyber domains, the Department is ensuring that the United States identifies and develops the right capabilities and strategies to defend U.S. interests and to sustain our advantages. The Department is also working with allies and partners to ensure our collective capabilities provide an effective deterrent and guarantee operational freedom of maneuver to sustain our advantages.

#### **China**

We are working with European allies and partners, both bilaterally and through NATO, to understand and address the challenges posed by the People's Republic of China (PRC). As Secretary Austin often asserts, China is the Department's pacing challenge. The PRC seeks to improve its warfighting capabilities through insights drawn from advanced militaries in Europe

and elsewhere, and we encourage allies and partners to think carefully through the types of engagements they conduct with the People's Liberation Army. Although many investments are beneficial, some PRC investments in Europe's critical infrastructure and technology, including telecommunications, ports, railways, and cutting-edge technologies with military application, require careful screening to ensure they do not pose a threat to NATO's security. The Department encourages counterpart governments to consider stronger processes and laws requiring foreign investment reviews, supply chain protections, and export controls to help blunt these PRC activities and to ensure that critical infrastructure and technologies are protected in the interest of national security. We agree with the European Union, which last year labelled China a systemic rival.

The PRC and Russia do collaborate across a variety of arenas, including their joint military exercises in the Baltic Sea and Russia. At the same time, there are potential areas of competition between the two despite their recent efforts to showcase high-level bilateral engagement. We continue to monitor this cooperation alongside our allies and partners, as well as the PRC and Russia's respective efforts to undermine the international rules-based order. Although the threats have increased, we are revitalizing and strengthening our alliances and partnerships to be able to meet these threats.

#### **The Arctic**

The Department's approach to the Arctic is described in the 2019 Arctic Strategy, which focuses on strategic competition as the principal challenge to long-term U.S. security and prosperity. The Department's desired end-state for the Arctic is "a secure and stable region where U.S. national interests are safeguarded, the U.S. homeland is defended, and nations work cooperatively to address challenges."

The Arctic Strategy establishes three defense objectives that guide the Department's approach to addressing strategic competition in the Arctic: 1) defend the homeland; 2) compete when necessary to maintain a favorable regional balance of power; and 3) ensure access to critical domains remains free and open.

The immediate prospect of conflict in the Arctic is low, but the Department maintains a realistic approach to the differing effects of competitors' activities on U.S. interests in the region and beyond. Russia's military investments in the Arctic contribute to its territorial defense yet also may have strategic implications for future access to the region. The PRC is seeking a role in Arctic governance, despite it having no territorial claims in the region, and there is a risk that the PRC may repeat predatory economic behavior in the Arctic that it has exhibited in other regions to further its strategic ambitions.

The Department is taking steps to enhance the Joint Force's ability to operate in the Arctic and project power through the region and beyond, both independently and in cooperation with allies and partners. Enhanced domain awareness, regular exercises and training, interoperable supporting infrastructure, and extreme cold weather resilience are mutual areas of development we are pursuing with allies and partners. The changing environment in the Arctic highlights the need to maintain the full range of navigation and overflight rights and freedoms guaranteed by international law to both military forces and lawful commerce.

Finally, our network of allies and partners is a key strategic advantage for the United States in the Arctic and is the cornerstone of the Department's strategic approach to the region. Six of the seven other Arctic nations are either NATO Allies or NATO Enhanced Opportunities Partners. Our allies and partners are highly capable and proficient in the Arctic region's operating conditions, and they share the United States' interest in maintaining the international



rules-based order – including in the Arctic region. Defense cooperation with allies and partners complements wider U.S. Government Arctic cooperation in forums such as the Arctic Council, which includes the United States, Canada, Russia, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway, and Sweden as members.

With the Department's 2019 Arctic Strategy, and a strong network of allies and partners, we believe we have the right strategic approach to address the unique challenges of this dynamic region.

#### **Europe's Eastern Flank**

NATO's Eastern Flank remains a focus of U.S. force posture in response to an increasingly aggressive Russia in the Baltic and Black Sea regions. In 2015, under Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE, the United States began rotating forces through and along the Eastern Flank to reassure our allies and deter Russia. This continues to be a Departmental priority, and we welcome the support of our NATO Allies through their contributions to enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) in the Baltic Sea region, tailored Forward Presence (tFP) in the Black Sea region, and their respective Air Policing missions.

#### ***Poland***

Poland is a hub for these European deterrence efforts. As a result, the Department has increased its rotational presence in Poland, including through the deployment of a rotational Armored Brigade Combat Team, a combat aviation detachment, a U.S. battalion leading the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group, the newly established V Corps Forward Command Post, and a planned AEGIS-Ashore facility. The United States has on average 4,500 rotational personnel in Poland, though the numbers fluctuate depending on exercise and deployment schedules.

In August 2020, the United States and the Government of Poland signed an Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), which, along with providing important legal protections for U.S. personnel operating in Poland, created an innovative cost-sharing framework. The EDCA sets out how Poland will fund logistical and infrastructure support for U.S. operating locations in Poland, except for those pertaining to ballistic missile defense and eFP. It is flexible and scalable to match the evolving deterrence and posture needs of the United States, Poland, and NATO.

#### *The Baltics*

In the Baltic region, the Department is bolstering the Eastern Flank Allies through security cooperation and capacity-building initiatives targeted at improving defense and security infrastructure in the Baltics and strengthening national resilience. NATO's enhanced air policing over the Baltics reinforces NATO's collective defense, demonstrating NATO's cohesion and the collective resolve of NATO Allies to implement deterrence through defense cooperation. The Baltic States support NATO's enhanced Forward Presence by hosting NATO battlegroups to help maintain an effective deterrent against Russia in the Baltic region. The United States stepped up security cooperation since 2015 following Russia's attempted annexation of Crimea and aggression in Eastern Ukraine. The Department is providing nearly \$100 million for joint procurement of large-caliber ammunition and more than \$70 million in training and equipping programs to the Baltics to build the capacity of the national military or national-level security forces of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to conduct border-security operations. The Department intends to continue with exercises and the periodic deployment of forces to the Baltic States to strengthen deterrence and to catalyze the efforts of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to develop their national defense.

Thanks to continued strong congressional support, such as enactment of the Baltic Security Initiative (BSI) in the Defense Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2021, the Department continues to invest in programs in the Baltics to deter Russian aggression, increase interoperability, and support modernization. The budget request included \$45 million for Baltic Air Defense Programs, which will invest in capabilities aligned with the Baltic Nations' own national defense plans and with U.S. European Command and NATO plans. We greatly appreciate the congressional support for these capacity-building efforts in the Baltic States.

***Romania and Bulgaria***

Southeastern Europe, specifically the Black Sea region, is also a focus of U.S. force posture and deterrence efforts in the Eastern Flank as Russia builds up forces in and around Crimea and maintains troops on territories taken by force from Moldova and Georgia in 1992 and 2008. Romania and Bulgaria are two important allies in defending our southeastern flank. Romania has been a forward-leaning NATO Ally implementing tailored Forward Presence (tFP) measures and providing full support for a U.S. presence in Romania of up to 1,000 rotational personnel. Our force posture in Romania, and especially our Army presence there, has grown in the past five years with the rotation of a battalion from an Armored Brigade Combat Team at Mihail Kogalniceanu (MK) Air Base, a combat aviation detachment at MK Air Base, and an MQ-9 site at Campia Turzii Air Base. In addition, U.S. sailors operate the Aegis Ashore missile defense site in Deveselu, and U.S. personnel staff NATO's Multinational Division Southeast in Bucharest.

Bulgaria has taken bold steps to confront aggressive Russian actions in the Black Sea region and has taken bold steps to modernize its Soviet-era military equipment. Bulgaria purchased eight F-16 Block 70s for \$1.3 billion to begin replacing its MiG-29 fleet, plans to

purchase eight more aircraft within the next year, and entered into a formal strategic partnership with the United States. Bulgaria provides U.S. forces broad access to three joint facilities, where the United States maintains a force presence of about approximately 250 personnel at any given period for training and exercises.

In October 2020, both Romania and Bulgaria signed Roadmaps for Defense Cooperation with the United States, which build upon existing efforts to advance their military readiness and capabilities through 2030, consistent with the U.S. defense priorities, NATO commitments, and their respective national defense priorities. We continuously review our force posture in this region, including through the current Global Force Posture Review, to deter and, if necessary, defend against Russian aggression along NATO's Eastern Flank and Black Sea region.

#### ***Ukraine and Georgia***

Ukraine and Georgia are frontline states in the strategic competition with Russia and are also vital partners in Europe's Eastern Flank and Black Sea region. In Ukraine, Russia occupies Crimea and sustains conflict in the Donbas in its attempt to intimidate the people of Ukraine, deny Ukraine its own sovereign choice, and redraw international borders by force, undermining the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity that have upheld the international order for decades. Russia's campaign to destabilize Ukraine's defense, economic, and political sectors includes disruptive cyber-attacks, denying Ukraine's navigation rights and freedoms in the Black Sea, Kerch Strait, and Sea of Azov, and the ongoing military aggression in the Donbas. Russia hopes these combined efforts will bolster the Russian Government's ability to dominate the region and thwart Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. However, we continue to stand by the declaration made at the 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest, and reiterated at the 2018 Brussels Summit, which states that Georgia and Ukraine will join the Alliance.

The United States strongly condemns Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine, a country that gave up a significant nuclear arsenal after the USSR's collapse. We will maintain corresponding sanctions until the Russian Government returns control of Crimea to Ukraine and lives up to its security commitments under the Minsk agreements.

The United States is unwavering in its support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders. The United States has committed more than \$2 billion in security assistance to Ukraine since 2014, including Javelin anti-tank missile systems, armed patrol boats, and other train-and-equip programs. The United States, in coordination with key allies, will continue to support Ukraine's most critical operational needs and enable Ukraine to build its long-term defense capacity, defend its territorial integrity, and deter further Russian aggression.

Ukraine has committed to enacting critical defense reforms, fighting corruption, and reshaping its defense industrial sector to support the Ukrainian Armed Forces more effectively. Critical to the reform efforts is the work of a cadre of U.S. senior advisors who have helped Ukraine implement reforms to align its national security architecture with Euro-Atlantic principles. These key institutional reforms constitute a major step toward Ukraine's goals of achieving NATO interoperability and establishing a defense industrial sector that best supports the Ukrainian warfighter. These efforts will bolster Ukraine's ability to defend its territorial integrity in support of a secure and thriving democratic Ukraine.

Georgia also faces Russian aggression, with 20 percent of its territory still occupied by Russia in violation of the 2008 ceasefire agreement that ended the 2008 conflict between the two countries. Russia leverages its military presence in Georgia, as well as other tools of influence and coercion such as disruptive cyberattacks and disinformation operations, in an ongoing

attempt to undermine Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. The United States fully supports Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity and continues to call on Russia to fulfill its obligations and commitments under the 2008 ceasefire agreement.

As a key strategic partner committed to pursuing closer integration with the West, including NATO membership, Georgia provides crucial support to Department of Defense efforts to advance U.S. interests in the geo-strategically important South Caucasus and Black Sea regions.

In addition to promoting regional security and stability, Georgia contributes approximately 860 military personnel, without caveats, to NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, making it the largest non-NATO, and largest per capita, force contributor. It has suffered 32 soldiers killed in action, and more than 290 wounded in Afghanistan.

The United States is committed to helping Georgia build its resilience and military capabilities in the face of Russia's malign efforts to undermine its sovereignty and disrupt its Euro-Atlantic integration. In its third and final year, the bilateral Georgia Defense Readiness Program is developing Georgia's institutional capacity to staff, train, equip, and sustain the Georgian Defense Forces. Enhancing Georgia's capability independently to generate and maintain ready forces prepared to execute all national missions enables it to defend itself more effectively and is key to deterring and countering Russian aggression in the Black Sea region.

#### **Europe's Southern Flank**

Bolstering our force posture in Southern Europe has been a focus since the attacks on our compounds in Benghazi, Libya, in 2012. An increased presence in this area improves access for crisis response and counter-terrorism and protects U.S. installations and interests in Africa. Our presence in NATO's Southern Flank also provides a counter balance to growing

Chinese and Russian influence in Southern Europe and Africa. Through its Belt and Road Initiative, China is seeking economic and political influence in Europe, including investment in commercial ports, which could have implications for our strategic access and freedom of movement. Meanwhile, Russia is expanding its presence in the Mediterranean, and in particular the Eastern Mediterranean, notably through its naval base at the Port of Tartus in Syria, but also more broadly through its malign influence efforts.

***Italy, Spain, and Portugal***

Italy hosts 13,500 U.S. military, civilian, and contractor personnel for operations and training on five major bases and other smaller installations. Naval Air Station Sigonella, in particular, has become an important hub for logistics; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; maritime situational awareness; crisis response; and theater cooperation, with the basing of U.S. Air Force unmanned aerial vehicles, among other force posture assets.

Additionally, for 68 years, the United States has maintained a military presence in Spain, highlighted by the 33<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the U.S.-Spain bilateral Agreement on Defense Cooperation. Spain hosts more than 3,000 U.S. military, civilian, and contract personnel in Rota and Morón, and these strategic bases support operational deployments throughout Africa and the Middle East. Spain actively promotes security in North and West Africa, and is a significant contributor to NATO, EU, and UN peacekeeping missions.

Portugal remains a staunch transatlantic ally with linguistic ties in West and South Africa and remains a strong U.S. partner and reliable NATO Ally whose forces deploy in small but meaningful capacities in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Mediterranean, the Baltics, and Africa. We also deeply appreciate our presence on the Azores, which continues to host forces at Lajes Field.

***Greece***

In October 2019, the United States and Greece signed a historic update of our Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement (MDCA), paving the way for a possible expansion of our basing relationship with Greece, at a time of uncertainty in the region. Our presence at U.S. Naval Support Activity (NSA) Souda Bay, Crete, with 650 U.S. personnel, is the cornerstone of our basing relationship. Souda Bay is critical for strategic access and support to regional operations. It is the largest deep-water port in the Mediterranean, hosting approximately 240 NATO ship visits per year, and serves as an air and sea logistics hub and Ballistic Missile Defense trans-loading point for U.S. forces assigned to USEUCOM. Since last year, Souda Bay is also the homeport for USS Hershel “Woody” Williams, an expeditionary mobile base. The Government of Greece has also been flexible with permissions to deploy U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) assets from Souda Bay for crisis response. The MDCA update has facilitated possible future expansion of activity at Larissa Air Base, where we currently are temporarily basing MQ-9s; and it supports the rotational training of U.S. Army Europe’s (USAREUR’s) 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Brigades at Stefanoviko Army Base. The MDCA also grants the United States preferential access to the Port of Alexandroupoulos, which our forces utilize for the movement of equipment to support major exercises in Europe.

### ***Turkey***

Turkey is an important Ally on NATO’s Southern Flank. Turkey contributes to coalition missions, including in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kosovo, and is on target to reach 2 percent of GDP defense spending by 2024. We continue to reiterate the importance of Turkey remaining grounded in NATO security structures and to encourage deeper cooperation among fellow Black Sea countries Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, and Georgia to deter Russian aggression in that region.



The United States has been clear in discouraging Turkey's procurement of the S-400 and the risks of a long-term Turkish defense relationship with Russia. We believe the S-400 procurement undermines the NATO Alliance, introduces risks to U.S. and NATO defense technology, and runs counter to Allies' pledges to reduce dependency on Russian equipment. Furthermore, Turkey's procurement prompted its removal from the F-35 program. We continue to press Turkey not to retain the S-400.

### ***The Balkans***

In the Balkans, Russia is pursuing a strategy designed to hinder the region's Euro-Atlantic integration through disinformation campaigns, cyberattacks, political subversion, and economic manipulation. Russia discourages recognition of Kosovo, exerts pressure on Serbia to accept Russian military equipment, spreads anti-Western disinformation in Montenegro and North Macedonia, and seeks veto authority to suppress Bosnia and Herzegovina's self-stated goals for Euro-Atlantic integration, without regard to the Dayton Peace Accords. The People's Republic of China (PRC) has increased its malign influence in the region, pressuring NATO Allies and partners alike to accept infrastructure and telecommunications deals that could violate their sovereignty. Russia and the PRC have also utilized COVID-19 pandemic relief and vaccine diplomacy in the Balkans to garner favor, engage with key leaders, and advocate for politics that run counter to Euro-Atlantic integration.

Despite these efforts, there are positive signs in the region. We celebrated North Macedonia's first anniversary of its NATO accession this March. Although ethno-nationalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina try to undermine state institutions, representatives of the three constituent peoples have made forward progress on cooperation with the EU and NATO, especially through their NATO Reform Program process. After devastating earthquakes in

Croatia this past year, countries across the region, including both Kosovo and Serbia, responded with aid. Balkan countries have made real progress on interoperability and NATO targets, even in the midst of budget shortfalls due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are especially proud that U.S. European Command has provided more than \$4 million in rapid COVID-19 assistance to Balkan nations, which have been hit hard by the pandemic, and that the COVAX mechanism, to which the United States pledged \$4 billion, is helping vaccinate the people of the Western Balkans. These countries have also relied on their decades of U.S.-facilitated training in defense support of civil authorities to combat the disease.

The Department continues to strengthen our history of investment in the region. The U.S. presence in NATO's Kosovo Force helps maintain a safe and secure environment in and freedom of movement for Kosovo's citizens, enabling an environment where political dialogue to normalize Kosovo-Serbia relations can advance, and supporting stability and security throughout the Balkans. Our allies and partners in the region share our commitment to enhancing global security and have consistently contributed to NATO-led and other international missions. We leverage the U.S.-Adriatic Charter, a regional security forum, to increase cooperation between Western Balkan countries. In addition, we rely on the National Guard's U.S. State Partnership Program (SPP) to develop long-term expertise in the region, improving our collective ability to train, collaborate, and defend against various threats, including COVID-19.

Our defense cooperation on reforms and institutional capacity building to bolster shared priorities, such as military medical efforts or counterterrorism, remain fundamental to the Department's approach in the region. We will continue to leverage our toolkit to eliminate regional militaries' dependence on Soviet legacy systems and support modernization and integration of NATO-interoperable equipment. The Department continues to support our Balkan

allies and partners through education, training, and security cooperation initiatives, while also expanding into new areas of cooperation, such as in the cyber domain. Malign actors' reckless and adversarial actions in the Balkans have reinforced our commitment to improving the cyber defense capabilities of our allies and partners.

### **Israel**

Israel is a major strategic partner for the United States. On January 15, the Department announced that the United States will shift Israel from the USEUCOM area of responsibility to the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) area of responsibility. This will open up additional opportunities for cooperation with our USCENTCOM partners, while maintaining strong cooperation between Israel and our European allies and partners.

Our strong defense relationship with Israel is supported by the appropriation of \$3.3 billion in foreign military financing and \$500 million in missile defense assistance this fiscal year. In the U.S.-Israel Memorandum of Understanding, the Administration agreed to request this level of support from Congress through fiscal year 2028, for a total of \$33 billion in foreign military financing and \$5 billion in missile defense assistance. I want to thank Congress for this longstanding bipartisan support to our defense relationship with Israel.

The Department bolsters Israel's defense through joint exercises, co-development of a multi-tiered missile defense architecture, and supply of advanced weapons and technology – proving our commitment to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge. The United States' longstanding support of Israeli ballistic missile defense programs includes co-development and co-production of the David's Sling and Arrow-3 missile defense systems. In 2020, the Missile Defense Agency and the Israel Missile Defense Organization cooperatively planned and successfully executed two critical flight tests – an Arrow-2 interceptor flight test in August 2020 and, in December

2020, a series of David's Sling Weapons System intercept tests in an advanced system configuration against threats simulating cruise missiles and theater ballistic missiles. Our defense policy dialogues are also extensive and cover the full range of global and regional challenges we face together.

### **Conclusion**

The Department is committed to revitalizing the NATO Alliance and our partnerships in Europe and with Israel to promote a stable and open international system. Our objective is to ensure our broad and deep network of alliances and partnerships endure. The United States will continue to take an active role in the region by maintaining a ready and capable force, investing in NATO, and promoting a network of like-minded allies and partners.

This work is only possible with consistent congressional backing and stable funding. Your support for our allies and partners in Europe, and for Israel, is invaluable. Congressional support for U.S. forces deployed in the USEUCOM area of responsibility, as well as funding for defense initiatives across Europe, have been, and will continue to be, critical to achieving U.S. national security objectives.

The Department of Defense, in conjunction with other U.S. Government departments and agencies, regional institutions, and regional allies and partners, in close consultation with Congress, will continue to ensure that Europe remains whole, free, and at peace.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I appreciate your continued support to the soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, guardians, and civilians in the Department of Defense who work every day in service of the American people.

**Laura K. Cooper**  
**Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs for Russia,**  
**Ukraine, Eurasia**

Laura Cooper is currently serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia, Ukraine, Eurasia. Ms. Cooper is a career member of the Senior Executive Service. She has responsibility for policy concerning Russia, Ukraine, Eurasia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, and Moldova), and Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia) as well as Conventional Arms Control.

Ms. Cooper previously served as a Principal Director in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security Affairs, with responsibility for policies on: mission assurance, defense continuity of operations, critical infrastructure protection, homeland counterterrorism, global antiterrorism policy, and the Council of Governors.

Ms. Cooper previously served as a Principal Director in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security Affairs, with responsibility for policies on: mission assurance, defense continuity of operations, critical infrastructure protection, homeland counterterrorism, global antiterrorism policy, and the Council of Governors.

Prior assignments in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy include: Director of the Strategy office, where she helped manage the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review; Acting Director for South Asia; and Afghanistan Team Chief, Stability Operations Office.

Prior to joining the Department of Defense in 2001, Ms. Cooper was a policy planning officer at the State Department in the Office of Coordinator for Counterterrorism. She has also served as a Junior Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Ms. Cooper has a Master of Science in Foreign Service degree from Georgetown University, a Master of Science in National Resource Strategy degree from the Industrial College of Armed Forces at National Defense University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Northwestern University.

UNITED STATES HOUSE  
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF  
GENERAL TOD D. WOLTERS, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

COMMANDER  
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND

APRIL 15, 2021

UNITED STATES HOUSE  
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

UNCLASSIFIED

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Rogers, and distinguished members of the House Armed Services Committee, on behalf of the dedicated men, women, and their families preserving peace in the European theater, it is an honor to testify before you today a second time as U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) Commander. It is a privilege to continue to serve alongside our dedicated patriots in a mission essential to national security. Their selfless service and determined commitment is an inspiration. Together, with likeminded Allies and Partners, our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, Guardians, and civilians work tirelessly to deliver peace and secure the United States' interests.

For the last eight decades, many European nations have been key allies and partners for the United States and today they collectively serve as exporters of global peace and security. The interim National Security Strategy articulates how a free, and prosperous Europe, defended by Allied nations and a credible North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Alliance, remains foundational to our security in a competitive geopolitical environment. USEUCOM aligns operations, activities, and investments to meet the challenges of Strategic Competition with Russia and the People's Republic of China. Through our strategy, we compete for long-term sustainable advantage, deter attacks from potential aggressors, and prepare our Allies and Partners to respond decisively. Standing alongside our Allies and Partners, USEUCOM remains ready, should deterrence fail, to fight now and win. We value the collaborative work across the Joint Force to implement this strategy and express gratitude for continued Congressional interest and support.

In Europe, political uncertainty, energy competition, malign activity, and the global pandemic stress the rules-based international order and strain European states' resources. Strategic competitors seek to exploit these conditions using all instruments of their national power to gain advantage and create instability. This nexus challenges national governments and multinational institutions like NATO and the European Union (EU). To address these issues, USEUCOM strategy prioritizes supporting NATO's deterrence and defense of the Euro-Atlantic

area, countering Russian malign influence, strengthening strategic relationships, and enabling U.S. global operations.

#### **RISKS AND CHALLENGES IN THE USEUCOM AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (AOR)**

The USEUCOM AOR encompasses 51 countries and territories, including Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, and the Caucasus. It contains significant maritime domains, encompassing the Arctic Region, the North and Central Atlantic, and the Mediterranean Sea. COVID-19 has presented challenges for nations across the globe, including those in Europe, and our deepest condolences are offered to all those impacted by this pandemic. In USEUCOM, we continue working diligently alongside Allies and Partners to ensure this health crisis does not become a security crisis. Thus far, our collective team has been successful, and we are buoyed through recent developments in vaccine production and distribution across the USEUCOM AOR.

#### **Russia**

Russia's nuclear arsenal and strike capability provides Russia an opportunity to remain an enduring, existential threat to the United States, our Allies, and our Partners. A central concern is Russia's non-strategic nuclear weapons stockpile and the Kremlin's potential to use these weapons in crisis or conflict. President Biden agreed with President Putin to conduct a Strategic Stability Dialogue, which will allow the United States to raise our concerns about Russia's nuclear forces and doctrine. Beneath this threshold, Russia engages in malign activities across the globe, attempting to create instability, undermining the rules-based international order, and failing to meet obligations under international agreements. These activities continue despite widespread international condemnation and economic sanctions. Russian President Vladimir Putin and his regime's coercive and aggressive policies suggest Russian leadership will take risks to maintain power, counter Western influence, and seize international opportunities to increase the perception of Russia as a great power.

Russia seeks to maintain a sphere of influence by retaining and employing capabilities above and below the level of armed conflict to coerce neighboring sovereign nations and fracture



NATO. Today, Russia continues meddling in the politics of former Soviet Republics, abrogates its responsibilities under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, and retains an active presence on sovereign soil in Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia against the will of those countries. To support their efforts at political subversion and economic intimidation, Russia employs unconventional tools, ranging from disinformation campaigns, malicious cyber activities, and the use of private military companies. These tools support a range of semi-covert, malign actions to intimidate, weaken, and divide our Allies and Partners in the European theater and beyond. By probing Western response thresholds to expand the space below the level of armed conflict, Russian leadership habitually risks misinterpreting warnings and creating unintended escalation.

Over the past decade, Russia consistently remained among the world's top five military spenders. Despite a forecasted decrease in Russian Gross Domestic Product due to the pandemic, Russia will continue its military modernization efforts. These robust capabilities and modernized forces have been displayed during operations in Ukraine, Syria, and Libya. As a result, the Kremlin has growing confidence in its military leadership and menu of hybrid, conventional, strategic, and non-strategic nuclear capabilities needed to underwrite its 21<sup>st</sup> century security approach. Today, Russia underpins its military force posture with Integrated Air Defense Systems (IADS), cyber and electronic warfare systems, counter-space, and long-range precision fires capabilities; all critical to seizing and maintaining the initiative across the competition to conflict spectrum.

#### **People's Republic of China (PRC)**

The PRC's aggressive economic and diplomatic activities in the USEUCOM AOR signal Beijing's desire to build influence in Europe and challenge the established rules-based international order with an alternative model. Beijing pursues economic leverage over targeted nations through bilateral deals to build infrastructure, and secures agreements to its advantage in global trade and market access. Chinese foreign direct investment and government-backed

business ventures provide Beijing an avenue to assert influence at the expense of enduring U.S., Allied, and Partner interests. Seventeen Central and Eastern European nations participate in the China-led, *17+1 Cooperation Framework* though there are indications that participants are more skeptical about its merits. Many European countries, including the *17+1*, take part in China's *One Belt One Road Initiative*.

The PRC is focused on seizing the "high ground" in critical and emerging technology sectors with military application, including Artificial Intelligence, advanced robotics, quantum technologies, and hypersonics. In addition, the PRC's efforts to expand 5G networks into Europe through state-backed firms like Huawei and ZTE pose security risks. These networks place intellectual property, sensitive technology, and private personal information at heightened risk of acquisition and exploitation by the Chinese government. This ongoing initiative, coupled with China's growing interest and investment in European ports and critical infrastructure, complicates steady state and contingency operations. We articulate this risk to our European defense counterparts and highlight shared values, interests, and equitable business practices that distinguish the U.S. as a partner of choice. European nations are becoming increasingly aware of, and concerned about, the risks associated with Chinese capital and investment from the PRC. We must hold the PRC accountable for its predatory and unfair practices and make sure that our technologies are not facilitating the PRC's military buildup or human rights abuses.

#### **Poland and the Baltics**

Poland and the Baltics remain a strategic focal point. For NATO, this region remains at risk of Russian aggression based on historical grievances and geographic position. Polish and Baltic geopolitical alignment with the West reminds the Kremlin of its limited sphere of control, isolation of its Kaliningrad exclave, and NATO's appeal to regional states. The Kremlin considers the Baltic's ethnic Russian population as justification for intervention. Russia actively targets this population with extensive propaganda and malign influence operations, while also conducting cyber operations to weaken Alliance resolve. Because Russian forces in the Western Military

District and Kaliningrad hold a geographic and numerical advantage over regional NATO forces, it is critical that timely indications and warnings are available to position combat-capable forces to deter and, if deterrence fails, blunt attack.

Regional Allies continue to demonstrate their commitment to collective defense.

Enhanced Forward Presence bolsters NATO's posture in the east with four multinational battle groups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. NATO air and missile defense forces reinforce collective security and stability through Baltic air policing operations and air defense exercises. Poland demonstrates resolve to meet Alliance commitments through defense budget increases, burden-sharing with the U.S. via the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, and ongoing modernization efforts, to include Patriot and F-35 weapon system acquisitions. Poland also hosts the U.S. Army's V Corps forward headquarters in Poznan, Poland, providing a needed level of command and control to synchronize U.S. Army, Allied, and Partner nation tactical formations operating in Europe.

#### **Black Sea Region**

##### *Ukraine*

Following the purported annexation of Crimea in 2014, Russia and its proxies continue to undermine Ukrainian defense, economic, and political sectors, attempting to pull Ukraine back into the Kremlin's sphere of influence and obstruct its integration with Western institutions. The ongoing conflict in the Donbas region, instigated by Russia, continues to destabilize Ukrainian security. Ceasefire violations occur often despite the established Minsk agreements. Russia continues to subvert the Ukrainian government through malicious cyber activities, supports illegitimate elections in Eastern Ukraine, and remains postured for the use of force in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. Contrary to Russia's intent, these coercive actions energize Ukrainian society and reinforce aspirations to membership in Euro-Atlantic institutions. Ukraine continues to fight corruption and enact defense reform to meet conditionality requirements associated with the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI).

*Turkey*

Despite political tensions and disagreements, Turkey remains a strategic U.S. Ally, critical to NATO and U.S. interests in Europe, Eurasia, North Africa, and the Middle East. Turkey possesses the second largest military in NATO and borders a volatile region. In addition to hosting thousands of U.S. personnel at sites across Turkey, the Turkish Armed Forces contribute to NATO missions in Afghanistan, Kosovo, and the Mediterranean Sea. U.S. forces in Turkey also support NATO ballistic missile defense and facilitate regional counter-terrorism operations.

Ankara continues to view the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), the Democratic Union Party (PYD), and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) as security threats. U.S. support for the SDF remains an area of difficulty in our bilateral security relationship. Turkey's purchase of the Russian produced S-400 air defense system ended Turkey's F-35 acquisition, further integration into NATO's IAMD Command and Control network, and resulted in sanctions for conducting significant transactions with Russia's defense industry through the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act.

However, Turkey retains a pivotal role in countering Russia. Ankara's relationship with Moscow remains competitive and transactional, with Turkish engagement often aimed at constraining Russian behavior. Both nations view the Black Sea region within their natural spheres of influence, and each continues to oppose the other in Libya. Turkey can best counter Russia through bilateral cooperation with the U.S. and multilateral cooperation with NATO.

*South Caucasus*

The Kremlin exerts influence over South Caucasus countries through the manipulation of regional tensions and unresolved military conflicts. The Kremlin believes chronic instability in this area enables Russian regional hegemony. Russia maintains leverage over Georgia by occupying Abkhazia and South Ossetia, blocking free movement of people and goods within Georgia's territory, detaining and harassing civilians living in and near occupied areas, and undermining Georgia's NATO membership aspirations. After brokering a ceasefire arrangement between

Armenia and Azerbaijan in November 2020, Russia increased its military presence in the region by deploying 2,000 troops to Nagorno-Karabakh as peacekeepers. Russia continues to sell military systems and hardware to both sides in the Nagorno-Karabakh.

#### **Balkans**

The Balkans remain a strategically significant region where Russian, and now Chinese, malign influence and existing ethnic tensions foster instability. Russia uses social and political tensions to impede Euro-Atlantic alignment and integration. China's emergence as an alternative patron for economic and defense cooperation, under suspect terms, further disrupts the region. Nonetheless, North Macedonia's NATO accession in March 2020 is a regional success story.

Despite Kosovo declaring independence in 2008, Russia, China, and other states (including some EU and NATO members) have yet to recognize its sovereign nation status. Kosovo and neighboring Serbia have yet to normalize relations. We encourage both parties to maintain dialogue towards a peaceful solution. Kosovo's principal stabilizing force remains NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR), which includes a small, but significant U.S. contribution that bolsters U.S. political leverage in the region. KFOR enables the security conditions required for normalization of Serbia-Kosovo relations and the planned 10-year transition of the Kosovo Security Force from 2018 to 2028.

Serbia seeks balance between East (Russia and China) and the West, but finds its EU ambitions hindered by Russian-stoked internal corruption, structural and economic challenges, EU-Russia sanctions, and the requirement to normalize Kosovo relations. Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to face political and ethnic instability. Fueled by Russian influence, obstructionists seek greater autonomy for Bosnia and Herzegovina's Serb-majority political entity, Republika Srpska, to weaken state authorities and frustrate further alignment with Western institutions. Nationalist politics and entrenched ethnic divisions between Bosniaks, Bosnian-Croats, and Bosnian-Serbs challenge Bosnia and Herzegovina's ability to chart a path of lasting stability and eventual NATO membership.

China seeks to expand influence in this region primarily through economic means. Chinese investments focus on large-scale transportation, energy, and information infrastructure. USEUCOM is concerned about Chinese motives as these initiatives expose EU and NATO member states to coercion and adversely affect the security of critical infrastructure. Furthermore, China continues to expand its defense and security ties with Serbia, particularly via high-level visits, unmanned aerial vehicle technology dependency, and joint exercises.

#### **Central Atlantic and the Arctic Region**

The Central Atlantic encompasses the maritime approaches to the Homeland and the transatlantic Sea Lines of Communication. Rarely navigated by Russia since the 1990's, advances in its submarine fleet and expanding maritime strategic goals have reinvigorated Russia's access to the broader Atlantic Ocean. As a global common, the Atlantic Ocean must remain open and free to facilitate commerce between Europe, the United States, and other international markets. It is imperative that we maintain our competitive advantage in the Central Atlantic through bolstered U.S. and Allied presence to defend the Homeland forward and maintain free and open transatlantic sea lines of communication.

We ensure these vital sea lines of communication remain open by securing the Greenland, Iceland, and United Kingdom gap, enabling access between the Atlantic and Arctic. USEUCOM coordinates with USNORTHCOM in these regions to provide a comprehensive approach to regional and homeland security. In the Arctic, Russia continues to militarize the region by introducing offensive capabilities that pose risks to U.S. and Allied forces and limit regional access. Collaborating with Allies and Partners, we work to enhance interoperability and proficiency, while demonstrating collective resolve to counter malign behavior. The Arctic remains a geopolitical zone of competition, driven by the opening of commercial shipping routes and increased access to resources including energy, minerals, and fisheries. We expect these activities and region focus to increase as the effects of climate change continue to be realized.

The existing rules-based order benefits all Arctic nations by facilitating sustainable economic development, fostering cooperation, and ensuring a stable conflict-free region. As a strategic corridor, a more open and active Arctic region will increasingly connect the U.S. Homeland, Europe, and the Indo-Pacific. China, declaring itself a “near-Arctic” power, invests in both Russian energy and the Northern Sea Route and seeks economic footholds among Arctic nations to gain influence over regional governance. In concert with our Allies and Partners, via a whole-of-government and whole-of-nations approach, USEUCOM must continue to maintain a credible Arctic deterrence to ensure that growing competition in this dynamic region does not lead to conflict.

#### **Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO)**

We continue to support U.S. interagency counter-VEO initiatives. These organizations remain a transnational threat with decentralized command and control, finance, and facilitation networks spreading from conflict zones into Europe. In particular, VEOs threaten to attack the U.S. and European Allies, including through weapons of mass destruction. Extremists exploit instability in North Africa, Iraq, and Syria to husband resources in the face of coalition counter efforts. VEO inspired and organized attacks in Europe further complicate integration efforts, potentially isolating refugee and migrant communities and making some members of these populations more vulnerable to recruitment. Despite diminished capabilities, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and other VEOs desire to conduct external operations, requiring global vigilance to prevent a resurgence and preclude future attacks against the U.S. Homeland, Europe, and our Allies and Partners.

#### **Israel**

Israel remains a critical U.S. partner facing complex and evolving security challenges. Iran continues to expand its regional influence, to provide lethal support to regional partners including Lebanese Hezbollah and Palestinian militant groups, and to develop options to threaten and attack Israel. Iran and its partners have made significant gains in asymmetric capabilities,

including advanced ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and armed unmanned aerial systems. Tehran remains committed to modernizing its military and continues to improve the range, lethality, and accuracy of its ballistic missile systems. However, Tehran's malign influence also presents opportunities as regional actors find common ground with Israel in the face of a common adversary. Recent bilateral agreements with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan represent notable progress in normalizing relations and improving the regional security environment.

In compliance with the 2020 Unified Command Plan, we continue close coordination within the Department of Defense to ensure an orderly and deliberate transfer of the operations, activities, and investments focused on Israel to USCENTCOM. Ongoing initiatives include a robust series of exercises, senior leader engagements with the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), coordination with the IDF to maintain Israel's qualitative military edge over any military threats to Israel, and naval support to defend Israel against growing Iranian ballistic missile threats. This assistance demonstrates the United States' unwavering commitment to Israel, enhances regional stability in the Levant, and deters the Iranian ballistic missile threat. Ultimately, our focus on a seamless transition will support U.S. interests and assist in the defense of Israel.

#### **USEUCOM OPERATIONS, ACTIVITIES, INVESTMENTS, AND OPPORTUNITIES**

##### **Strategy Implementation**

Along with Allies and Partners, USEUCOM confronts challenges by competing to secure long-term sustainable advantage, deterring potential aggressors, and preparing to respond decisively. As the coordinating authority for the Russia Problem Set, USEUCOM advises the Secretary of Defense on force structure, resources, and synchronization of Department of Defense activities to deter Russia and counter its global malign activities. We work tirelessly with Allies, Partners, and the U.S. interagency to address the evolving challenges posed by our adversaries. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, we display vigilance in this complex security



environment, and—should deterrence fail—remain ready to respond with lethal and resilient force in all domains.

Congress provides critical support to the USEUCOM AOR through the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI). EDI enhances our theater posture to deter adversaries and compete in a contested logistics environment, while assuring Allies and Partners. Increases in forward-stationed and rotational forces strengthen our contact, blunt, and surge layer capabilities, providing us the ability to compete and win in a multi-domain crisis or conflict. EDI investments improve our response using more robust theater infrastructure and prepositioned stocks. Funding for exercises, training, and building partner capacity bolster the readiness and interoperability of U.S. and Alliance forces. Together, these advances enable our deterrence and defense efforts through rapid deployment and sustainment of forces.

**Support NATO's Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area**

USEUCOM's primary mission is to compete, deter, and respond to aggression with the full weight of the NATO Alliance. NATO continues adapting to meet the challenges and complexities of our dynamic security environment. Together, we continue improving our speed, posture, transparency, and alignment. Through new strategic concepts, establishing new commands, continuing investment in critical military capabilities, implementing enhanced readiness, and pursuing a robust array of operations, missions, and activities, we demonstrate our combined ability to deter and defend. The cohesion of these efforts has not waned during our collective response to the global pandemic.

In 2020, NATO released the Concept for the Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area (DDA), NATO's first deterrence and defense concept since 1967. Nested with the 2019 NATO Military Strategy, this concept guides Alliance approaches towards threats from Russia and international terror groups. To support this effort, NATO bolstered deterrence efforts in the space and cyberspace domains by establishing a cyberspace operations center at the Supreme

Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Mons, Belgium and integrating its Space Center into Allied Air Command at Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

Two new commands, Joint Forces Command Norfolk and the Joint Support and Enabling Command, enhance Alliance adaptation to the dynamic geopolitical environment. These headquarters focus on transatlantic lines of communication and coordinating support functions, enabling the deployment and sustainment of NATO forces during crisis or conflict. The EU, NATO, and USEUCOM continue to sustain progress improving infrastructure and transit permissions facilitating the rapid movement of forces and logistic support across the Euro-Atlantic.

NATO nations continue to invest in critical military capabilities, contributing to common defense and supporting the Alliance. For the past six years, European NATO nations consistently increased defense expenditures and future projections remain positive despite the COVID-19 pandemic. NATO is increasing interoperable combat power through major acquisitions to include cyber capabilities across the Alliance; High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) long range fires capability in Romania; fourth and fifth-generation aircraft in Bulgaria, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, and Poland; along with embarking the United Kingdom's aircraft carrier, *HMS Queen Elizabeth*.

NATO's ability to compete and win through crisis and conflict continues to improve with implementation of the Readiness Action Plan and NATO Readiness Initiative. This effort provides an improved ready, responsive, and reinforced posture. Complementing the NATO Response Force, the Readiness Initiative provides additional ready forces able to respond rapidly to aggression by designating 30 battalions, 30 air squadrons, and 30 naval combat vessels for potential use in 30 days.

NATO members contribute to theater anti-submarine warfare operations and provide critical host nation support to forward-stationed U.S. forces across the region. Allies and Partners contribute forces to ongoing NATO and U.S.-led coalition missions advancing our common

interests in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Iraq, and Syria. Furthermore, Allies and Partners underwrite infrastructure investments and defray costs of U.S. military construction through the NATO Security Investment Program. Additionally, we expect improvements by individual European nations and the EU to enhance military mobility, increasing their responsiveness and combat capability. The EU, in consultation with NATO, projects to invest 1.69 billion euros over the next 7 years for civilian and military dual-use transportation infrastructure improvements across the continent.

Our Allies responded in solidarity to alleviate suffering during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing airlift, field hospitals, medical expertise, ventilators, and other critical supplies. The Alliance established a NATO Pandemic Response Trust Fund to stockpile medical equipment and supplies necessary during the second COVID-19 wave in Europe. Multiple Allies received critical ventilators and medical supplies from this initiative in late 2020.

USEUCOM plans to demonstrate joint capabilities during the upcoming U.S.-led exercises DEFENDER-Europe and ASTRAL KNIGHT. These multi-domain exercises directly complement NATO-led exercises such as STEADFAST JUPITER that maintain maritime air defense, anti-submarine warfare, and maritime interdiction capabilities. Ongoing enhancements to multinational information sharing systems enable USEUCOM execution with NATO and non-NATO partners. Ultimately, military exercises with our Allies remain an integral part of demonstrating Alliance readiness, interoperability, and capability.

The participation of USEUCOM forces in NATO operations and activities demonstrates U.S. commitment to the Alliance. Our soldiers serve in Poland as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence mission in one of four battlegroups deterring Russian aggression in Poland and the Baltics. U.S. Air Forces in Europe support NATO Enhanced Air Policing missions, safeguarding the sovereignty of Allied airspace against Russian incursions. We plan to support Standing NATO Maritime Group Two in 2022 with U.S. naval capability to counter maritime challenges in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and the Baltic Sea. Operation ATLANTIC SENTRY,

conducted by U.S. Aegis destroyers based in Rota, Spain, and the Aegis Ashore system in Romania provides the foundation of NATO's ballistic missile defense capability.

We leverage Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) to demonstrate operational unpredictability to adversaries, improve deterrence, and support our Allies. Recent DFE operations include posturing USS *Roosevelt* to the High North, Bomber Task Force missions throughout the AOR, a combined arms battalion deployment for DEFENDER Europe 20, and an F-35 deployment to exercise with Allies. Additionally, USS *Eisenhower* Carrier Strike Group presence in European waters this spring is a tremendous message to Allies and Partners about our commitment to deter and a critically important interoperability and training opportunity. Each force presence and operation demonstrates our ability to generate significant combat power across the AOR, while improving posture and warfighting readiness. This operational flexibility enhances cross-combatant command coordination and resource sharing, allowing for seamless transition and handover across Unified Command Plan boundaries to quickly deploy forces for emerging requirements.

Rotational Army, Marine, and Special Operations Forces (SOF) maintain a presence in strategic locations across the theater. These forces work alongside Allies and Partners to deter aggression, counter malign activities, build host nation defense capability, and enhance interoperability. For example, in Eastern Europe a rotational armored brigade combat team and combat aviation brigade participate in Operation ATLANTIC RESOLVE to hone Alliance warfighting skills. Additionally, rotational Marine Forces in Norway reinforce NATO's Northern periphery while training in Arctic conditions with our Norwegian allies. Rotational forces are critical to our ability to deter Russia and assure Allies.

#### **Counter Russian Activities and Malign Influence**

Every day, USEUCOM and NATO compete to deter the increasingly capable military underwriting Russia's power and counter the malign behavior that guides efforts to enhance perceptions the Kremlin is a responsible actor. Aside from USEUCOM's own capabilities, we

leverage our Allies and Partners and the unique attributes our U.S. interagency team brings to deterrence and defense.

As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO must remain a nuclear Alliance. NATO's nuclear capability preserves peace, prevents coercion, deters aggression, and instills confidence in the transatlantic bond. The Alliance's strategic forces guarantee security and backstop U.S. operations in Europe. NATO continues to adapt its nuclear posture to ensure these capabilities remain credible, resilient, and adaptable. USEUCOM fully supports modernization and recapitalization of our nuclear forces. Sustained Congressional funding for these programs demonstrates commitment to our operations and solidarity with NATO.

In the ground domain, we expect to establish a U.S. division-sized capability through the combination of forward-stationed forces, rotational forces, and Army Prepositioned Stocks (APS). APS equipment facilitates increased agility and lethality by enabling rapid integration of rotational combat units into operations. During Exercise DEFENDER-Europe 20, U.S. Army Europe and NATO Allies successfully exercised at the battalion and brigade levels, and we plan to assemble a divisional formation on NATO's Eastern flank in Exercise DEFENDER-Europe 24, the first since the end of the Cold War.

In the maritime domain, Carrier Strike Group and amphibious presence are key elements of a lethal and agile theater posture. U.S. Sixth Fleet provides maritime command and control capability across the USEUCOM AOR, while U.S. Second Fleet complements and contributes to reinforcing NATO's Western, Northern, and Southern flanks. Last fall, the guided missile destroyer USS *Roosevelt* completed a 50-day patrol in the High North where it joined five other nations in NATO's Allied Maritime Command-led anti-submarine warfare exercise DYNAMIC MONGOOSE 20. Additionally, U.S. and U.K. warships conducted exercises in the Barents Sea, the first of its kind since the mid-1980s. While Russia attempts to impose costs with increased out of area deployments not witnessed since the Cold War, the reality is our crews are gaining invaluable real-world operational experience, demonstrating operational flexibility, and developing

tactical undersea warfare advances for the next generation of Sailors. The \$539M EDI investments in wide area search systems, new sonobouy capabilities, and improved communications systems are enhancing our competitive advantage. This enables the U.S. and Allies to meet Strategic Competition objectives in the maritime environment and improve our overall maritime domain awareness.

In the air domain, we are improving our mix of fighter aircraft to enhance Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD), support Allies' efforts to enhance their air defense systems, and increase long range strike capability for deterrence. For example, Exercise ASTRAL KNIGHT 20 integrated U.S. air and missile defense capabilities with the Polish Air Force. In Bomber Task Force missions, U.S. bombers launched from bases in the U.S. and Europe, fly vast distances across the AOR while integrating with NATO and partner nation forces. We seek to enhance current posture, complicate adversary decision-making and impose costs while assuring our NATO Allies via Agile Combat Employment. Agile operations supported by Combined Joint All Domain Command and Control, and domain awareness capabilities with improved communications infrastructure, demonstrate a credible combat deterrence force network from potential airfields across the continent. This expansion of European contingency air operation and deployable air base sets enhances the survivability of our forces.

We remain laser focused in space, a domain whose importance to USEUCOM, NATO, and the globe cannot be overstated. Leveraging U.S. Space Command capabilities, we ensure our ability to plan and execute multi-domain operations. Additionally, we work with the U.S. Space Force, Allies, and Partners to further integrate space capabilities into joint and combined operations and activities.

In the cyber domain, USEUCOM's Joint Cyber Center coordinates with Joint Forces Headquarters Cyber and U.S. Cyber Command to counter Russian malign cyber activities and enhance our Allied and Partner capabilities. Recognizing the worldwide cyber capabilities of China, Iran, and North Korea, we work with other combatant commands and interagency partners

to enhance global cyber defenses and our ability to impose costs on malicious adversary behavior. In the information environment, the Russian Influence Group (RIG) provides a key platform for competing with Russia. We co-chair this effort with U.S. Department of State's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. Congressional funding for these unique cybersecurity and hybrid warfare programs (i.e. electronic warfare, special operations, and information domain operations), particularly through the State Department's Countering Russian Influence Fund - Foreign Military Financing (CRIF-FMF), enables the RIG to challenge adversary narratives and disinformation. Congressional funding for these unique information operations enables USEUCOM to challenge adversary narratives and disinformation.

Our Special Operations forces work with European Allies and Partners to build capacity, counter malign activity, and improve resilience. These unique capabilities enable USEUCOM to identify, attribute, and counter Russian malign influence. Furthermore, our Special Operations personnel provide invaluable contributions in sensing the operational environment, enhancing our ability to deter through enhanced indications and warnings.

Along Russia's border, key U.S. partners see a brighter future to the West and resist Moscow's efforts to hold them in the Russian sphere of influence. Ukraine seeks a closer partnership with the U.S. despite an ongoing Kremlin-sponsored malign influence campaign and violence by Russian supported forces in the Donbas region. The U.S. supports the Ukrainian Armed Forces through mentorship and advice from the Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine and with military and civilian advisors embedded across Ukraine's defense sector. With Ukraine a recognized operational partner to NATO, Allies and Partners also assist Ukraine's defense efforts, including the U.K.'s Operation Orbital and Canada's Operation Unifier. The U.S., U.K., Canada, Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, and Sweden comprise the Multinational Joint Commission, which coordinates Allied and Partner FMF and USAI security cooperation funding. This funding, along with the Joint Military Training Group-Ukraine effort, help build Ukrainian military capability, competence, and interoperability. Continued USAI and FMF funding enables

Ukraine to defend its sovereignty against well-armed Russian-backed forces. Department of State and Department of Defense continue working closely on resource coordination.

As part of a whole-of-government approach, our Joint Interagency Counter Trafficking Center supports interagency efforts to combat Russian malign activities, primarily by assisting federal law enforcement activities. This initiative provides USEUCOM with additional areas for competition. Through these partnerships, USEUCOM leverages a range of interagency driven effects including criminal investigations and convictions, seizures, sanctions, and designations.

Our approach in competition considers escalation management and control to maximize deterrence and defense. In conjunction with this emphasis, we make extensive use of authorized military-to-military channels with Russia to safely deconflict activities, when necessary, and maintain strategic stability.

#### **Advance and Strengthen Strategic Relationships**

Our strong bilateral and multilateral ties with European Allies and Partners enable advancement of our shared interests. Our military-to-military relationships across the Euro-Atlantic area remain strong, signaling the resilience of our collective defense.

Turkey remains a key U.S. and NATO Ally. We recognize Turkey's leadership role as a strategic NATO ally. Turkey hosts U.S. service members conducting a wide array of NATO, bilateral, and unilateral missions including radar and tanker support to ongoing operations. Additionally, Turkey contributes forces to NATO missions in Afghanistan, Kosovo, and Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 in the Mediterranean Sea. In 2020, Turkey supported a U.S. Bomber Task Force with tanker and fighter assets.

In the South Caucasus, Georgia remains a steadfast partner and contributor to global security. Georgia's commitment of approximately 860 soldiers to the Resolute Support Mission, the largest non-NATO contributor to NATO's Afghanistan mission, indicates the enduring strength of our strategic partnership. We assist Georgian forces in preparing for this mission through the Georgia Deployment Program. Georgia hosted NOBLE PARTNER 20 -- a Georgian Defense



Force and U.S. Army Europe exercise – to enhance Georgian, regional partner, and U.S. force readiness and interoperability in a realistic, multinational training environment. We support Georgia's efforts to generate and sustain capable defense forces through the Georgia Defense Readiness Program, which enables Georgia to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In the Arctic, changing environmental conditions present new opportunities for exploration, trade, and interaction. USEUCOM supports whole-of-government efforts to preserve the region, address shared challenges with other Arctic nations, and secure U.S. interests. We leverage close relations with European Arctic nations and our coordination with USNORTHCOM to build awareness while strengthening the call for open and non-invasive impacts in the region. These bilateral and multilateral strategic relationships enhance Alliance efforts to deter Russian aggression and advance shared interests.

We strengthen our strategic relationships through security cooperation initiatives. U.S. National Guard forces maintain vibrant relationships and unique access with Allies and Partners through the State Partnership Program (SPP). With more than 500 engagements through 22 active programs annually, the SPP cultivates regional expertise and strengthens personal relationships to improve readiness and alignment across the AOR. Programs such as the Black Sea Maritime Initiative and enhancing Baltic IAMD represent potent, regionally-focused components, of a resilient theater posture.

#### **Enable U.S. Global Operations**

Europe and the U.S. remain the foundation for upholding a free and open international order. Our unique geographic location enables global operations, including U.S. interagency and multinational operations, through synchronization and agreements for access, basing, and overflight permissions within Europe. We work within the whole-of-government approach to maintain these permissions under bilateral agreements and to resist Russian and Chinese strategic investments. Absent these agreements, the U.S. could not meet treaty obligations or effectively protect vital national interests. The shared values, trust, civilian leadership of the

military, and longstanding relationships we have in Europe enable the U.S. to generate coalitions for worldwide operations in support of shared national interests.

Last year, Allies and Partners proved essential in our efforts to deter Iranian aggression. European support enabled the rapid posture shift of U.S. forces in response to potential contingencies in the Levant. Key partners provided indispensable access, basing, and overflight permissions enhancing our protection of American citizens and diplomats. This highlights how Allies and Partners enable U.S. global operations that preserve and defend our national interests.

#### **Conclusion**

Maintaining a capable U.S. presence in Europe strengthens our national security by encouraging peace, unity, and cohesion between Europe's individual nations. Competitors, notably Russia and China, present formidable, enduring challenges to preserving a Europe that is free and peaceful. U.S. service members in Europe continue to generate global peace alongside our Allies and Partners in the face of these obstacles. Our strategy addresses the dynamic security environment by ensuring we effectively compete for long-term sustainable advantage, deter attacks from potential aggressors, and prepare our Allies and Partners to respond decisively.

We appreciate Congressional interest in these challenges and your continued pledge to meet them through engagement, funding, and authorities; particularly your efforts to support the European Deterrence Initiative and International Security Cooperation Programs. These authorities enhance U.S. and Alliance readiness and posture to respond in crisis or conflict. We sit in a strategically significant part of the world and the dedicated men and women of the command continually remember the trust our nation places in us. Together with the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, Guardians, and civilians of USEUCOM, your support demonstrates our Nation's continued commitment to defend the Homeland forward and preserve peace for the one billion people living in the Euro-Atlantic region.

**General Tod D. Wolters**  
**Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and Commander,**  
**U.S. European Command**

U.S. Air Force General Tod D. Wolters assumed duties as Commander, U.S. European Command, on May 2, 2019. He is responsible for one of two U.S. forward-deployed geographic combatant commands whose area of focus spans across Europe, portions of Asia and the Middle East, and the Arctic and Atlantic oceans. The command is comprised of more than 60,000 military and civilian personnel, and is responsible for U.S. defense operations and relations with NATO and 51 countries.

General Wolters previously served as Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe; Commander, U.S. Air Forces Africa; Commander, Allied Air Command, headquartered at Ramstein Air Base, and Director, Joint Air Power Competence Centre, Kalkar, Germany.

General Wolters received his commission in 1982 as a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. He has been assigned to numerous operational command and staff positions, and has completed nine overseas tours, including two tours in Afghanistan. He commanded the 19th Fighter Squadron, the 1st Operations Group, the 485th Air Expeditionary Wing, the 47th Flying Training Wing, the 325th Fighter Wing, the 9th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force-Afghanistan, and the 12th Air Force.

General Wolters fought in operations Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. He served in the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, as Legislative Liaison Director and in headquarters staff positions at U.S. Pacific Command, Headquarters U.S. Air Force and Air Force Space Command. Prior to commanding U.S. Air Forces in Europe and U.S. Air Forces Africa, General Wolters served on the Joint Staff as Director for Operations. He is a combat-experienced command pilot with more than 5,000 flying hours in the F-15C, F-22, OV-10, T-38, and A-10 aircraft.

General Wolters earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1982, a master's degree in aeronautical science technology from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 1996, and a master's degree in strategic studies from the Army War College in 2001. Additionally, he served as a senior executive fellow at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 2004 and a fellow with National Defense University's Pinnacle Course in 2014.

General Wolters' decorations and awards include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Defense Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters, the Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Air Medal, the Aerial Achievement Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters and the Air Force Combat Action Medal.



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**WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING  
THE HEARING**

APRIL 15, 2021

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#### **RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. LANGEVIN**

Ms. COOPER. DOD continues to work with its partners within the U.S. Government to refine and improve the process for quickly attributing foreign malign cyber activities against the United States, including providing declassified evidence to support our attribution when that can be done without compromising intelligence sources and methods. [See page 15.]

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#### **RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. WITTMAN**

Ms. COOPER. We seek cooperation with Turkey on common priorities, including on countering Russian ambitions in the Black Sea region. We have a strong interest in keeping Turkey aligned with the transatlantic alliance on such critical issues. In the Black Sea, Turkey attempts to balance several competing interests. These include Turkey's regional ambitions, its NATO commitments, its desire to accommodate Russia in some cases and to counter Russia's growing military posture in other cases, and its long-term interest in promoting multilateral cooperation with other Black Sea states, including several NATO Allies and Turkey's growing bilateral cooperation with Ukraine. U.S. access, basing, and overflight in Turkey, including at Incirlik Air Base, remain important for supporting emergent U.S., NATO, and Coalition requirements and missions in the region, including the Bomber Task Force mission in Europe and the Black Sea region. On February 9, U.S. and Turkish forces conducted a bilateral joint maritime and air exercises in the Black Sea. The uptick in joint military efforts is a bright spot demonstrating our continued bilateral cooperation and the maintenance of our critical military-to-military relationship. [See page 19.]

General WOLTERS. Turkey remains a strategic U.S. Ally, critical to NATO and U.S. interests in Europe, Eurasia, North Africa, and the Middle East. Turkey possesses the Alliance's second largest military and contributes to NATO missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, and the Mediterranean Sea. Turkey retains a pivotal role in countering Russia, and despite limited but high profile dealings, the two are competitors in multiple regions, whose relationship remains transactional. As reaffirmed by Turkey's President Erdogan in April 2021, Turkey is committed to impartially enforcing the 1936 Montreux Convention, which enshrined Turkey's control of maritime traffic through the Dardanelles, Bosphorus, and Sea of Marmara. [See page 19.]

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#### **RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. GAETZ**

General WOLTERS. We work every day to build a cooperative and cohesive approach so our mutual efforts result in increased transparency and alignment. NATO plays an important role in creating a unified framework to guide Allied force development programs and national investments. The European Deterrence Initiative enables EUCOM to meet U.S. national security requirements in concert with our Allies and Partners. We also particularly appreciate Congress's support to theater Security Cooperation programs that support allied and partner efforts to achieve critical capabilities, such as Integrated Air and Missile Defense in the Baltic region. [See page 33.]

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#### **RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. GARAMENDI**

General WOLTERS. Thirty-six (36) European Deterrence Initiative military construction projects were deferred. Restoring key projects, including strategic logistics storage, airfield upgrades, and staging, enhances our speed and posture to execute in crisis. We seek restoration for 15 projects. Eight projects (\$143M) are ready to proceed within 3–6 months upon funding restoration. Two projects (\$93M) continue with planning & design activities and will be ready in FY22. Five projects (\$115M) in Norway and Slovakia are pending Defense Cooperation Agency resolution and are

also expected in FY22. The remaining 21 of the original 36 projects are either being funded through reprogramming, host nations, or are no longer required. The highest priority projects for restoration of funds are Airfield Upgrades to support P-8A aircraft at Sigonella Naval Air Station (\$23M), Deployable Air Base System-Facilities, Equipment, Vehicles Storage (\$303M), and Munitions Storage/Handling Areas/Ammo holding area (\$125M). [See page 43.]



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**QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING**

APRIL 15, 2021

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. SCOTT

Mr. SCOTT. Major General Timothy C. Hanifen, U.S. Marine Corps (Retired), wrote an article in the February 2021 edition entitled "Revitalize Fleet Search, Rescue, and Recovery Operations." Is U.S. European Command prepared for mass survivor search, rescue, and recovery at sea?

General WOLTERS. Yes, through our maritime component Naval Forces Europe (NAVEUR), we are capable of responding to mass casualties at sea and we are bound to render aid and rescue at sea. We empower our ships and aircraft commanders to assist those in distress and take prompt action to save human lives. Under the existing international structure, we coordinate responses via the regional Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Center, leveraging available NATO, European Union, and Partner Nation military and Coast Guard units to provide assistance.

Mr. SCOTT. If the U.S. Coast Guard decided to equip their cutters with ASW capability, would that be welcomed by EUCOM?

General WOLTERS. We welcome ASW capability on any platform in our theater. ASW capability enhances our operational readiness and assures our Allies and Partners. USEUCOM periodically incorporates Coast Guard vessels throughout Europe, and would leverage every capability those ships bring into theater.

Mr. SCOTT. What would the advantages be to EUCOM if the United States paired the Navy's P-8s with the Air Force's B-1s to wage long-range anti-submarine and surface warfare strikes?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM benefits from the joint efforts by the Services when able to conduct multi-domain tactical operations. We defer to the Services to develop tactics, techniques, and procedures and any option to improve our speed and ability to deter at range in the maritime domain would add value in generating peace.

Mr. SCOTT. How is EUCOM addressing the emerging threat of drones and drone swarming tactics?

General WOLTERS. Service components deploy Counter-small Unmanned Aircraft Systems in the Area of Responsibility at select locations coordinated with host nations. We engage host nations to obtain appropriate permissions and coordinate to protect host nation and U.S. assets and personnel. Additionally, USEUCOM provides updates on information, intelligence, tactics, techniques, and procedures to the Joint Staff Joint Counter-Unmanned Aircraft System Office Working Group.

Mr. SCOTT. What are EUCOM's capabilities against a drone swarm attack? Do we currently have the ability to defeat a drone swarm attack and ensure we do not take out our drones?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM deploys Counter small-Unmanned Aircraft Systems across the Area of Responsibility to detect, track, and defeat small Unmanned Aircraft Systems. We continue enhancing capabilities with host nations to defeat drone swarm attacks. USEUCOM works with country teams, Offices of Defense Cooperation and Embassy teams to refine host nation authorization for enhanced protections against small Unmanned Aircraft Systems threats.

Mr. SCOTT. What is EUCOM working on to defeat adversary drones, singles and swarms, today and in the future?

General WOLTERS. The USEUCOM team is engaged with the Joint Counter-small Unmanned Aircraft System Office (JCSO) as the Executive Agent for Counter Small Unmanned Aircraft System on technology updates, training, and industry advancements to detect, defend and defeat small Unmanned Aircraft Systems. Additionally, we continue to engage our host nations to coordinate authorizations through spectrum management and local laws and regulations.

Mr. SCOTT. What are the factors limiting your ability to deploy counter-UAS systems in EUCOM?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM deploys Counter small-Unmanned Aircraft Systems across the Area of Responsibility to detect, track, and defeat small Unmanned Aircraft Systems. We continue enhancing capabilities with host nations to defeat small Unmanned Aircraft Systems. We work with country teams, Offices of Defense Cooperation and Embassy teams to coordinate spectrum management authoriza-

tions and refine host nation authorizations to better align and enhance protections against small Unmanned Aircraft Systems threats.

Mr. SCOTT. General Wolters, you've noted before that ISR is critical to both monitor and deter Russian activity within your AOR. How do you assess your current and future ISR needs?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM's ISR allocation executes National Defense Strategy priority missions to deter and compete below the threshold of armed conflict with moderate risk. We request continued support for funding and modernization of airborne and space-based ISR capabilities and capacity. Specific regions and capabilities can be amplified in a classified venue.

Mr. SCOTT. What do you need from Congress to ensure you have the ISR resources you need to succeed in your mission?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM benefits with continued support for funding and modernization of airborne and space-based ISR capabilities and capacity. Sufficient allocation of ISR to meet validated requirements supports unambiguous indications and warnings against adversary activity, provides critical force protection and threat warning to USEUCOM operations, activities, investments, and supports overall mission command. Robust policies and technology to support imagery and automated data sharing between the U.S. and Allies and Partners supports NATO convergence and interoperability.

Mr. SCOTT. In 2020, Congress responded to the combatant commanders' call for more ISR resources by appropriating \$250M for the ISR transfer fund, which funded additional ISR activities in the EUCOM AOR. How did you leverage these additional resources in 2020? For 2021, the Pentagon did not request any funds for the ISR transfer fund and Congress did not appropriate any additional funds. How will the lack of ISR transfer funds in 2021 impact your mission?

General WOLTERS. We leveraged 2020 funds to enhance near-term tactical and operational level theater ISR capabilities and modernize unmanned systems with greater speed than the PBR cycle affords. These efforts improve indication and warning intelligence and support our deterrence efforts. Success in 21st century warfare demands that we embrace competition and its activities below the threshold of armed conflict. In order to win in competition, we must be laser focused in maximizing investments in indications and warning, feedback and command and control capabilities.

Mr. SCOTT. Do you think ABMS and Joint All Domain Command and Control will have enough operational capability to fill the ISR gaps that JSTARS will not be able to fulfill once it is parked?

General WOLTERS. In this era of global power competition, we continue to adapt to changes in the operational environment to maintain a combat-credible force. Under Joint Staff coordination, Joint all-domain command and control connects distributed sensors, shooters, and data from and in all domains, to all forces, enabling distributed mission command at the speed and scale 21st century warfare demands. USEUCOM joint and allied warfighters continue to train and demonstrate the Advanced Battle Management System's ability to converge assets from all domains across the Euro-Atlantic region.

Mr. SCOTT. I am a strong supporter of the National Guard's State Partnership Program. My home State of Georgia is partnered with the country of Georgia in your AOR. Can you talk about the value added by the Georgia National Guard to this partnership with the country of Georgia?

General WOLTERS. Georgia is a friend and key strategic partner of the U.S., strengthened by the Georgia National Guard's partnership, over 25 years strong. Years of deploying together side-by-side in Iraq and Afghanistan have only strengthened our mutual trust and respect. The Guard is instrumental in strengthening Georgia's capacity to train and operate with our Allies and Partners in exercises such as our Noble Partner and Allied spirit as well as in key areas like explosive ordnance disposal, cyber-security, and professional development. Future partnership activities will continue supporting bilateral efforts focused on enabling Georgia to effectively defend its territory, resist malign Russian influence, build interoperability with NATO forces, and institute defense reforms which further its Euro-Atlantic integration.

Mr. SCOTT. Do NATO members have significant security interests in the Taiwan Strait?

General WOLTERS. Each NATO member state has its own relationship with China, with a variety of different concerns and interests, to include the status of Taiwan. For U.S. policy, I defer to the Department of State and the USINDOPACOM Commander.

Mr. SCOTT. Are you satisfied with the level of cooperation between the United States and the other 29 NATO countries to deter Communist Chinese aggression

against Taiwan? If not, what more could our NATO allies do to deter Communist Chinese aggression against Taiwan?

General WOLTERS. NATO is adopting a global approach and developing closer relations with its four Asia-Pacific partners, namely Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and New Zealand. In December 2020, the four Asia-Pacific partners participated for the first time in a NATO Foreign Ministerial Meeting, discussing the shift in the global balance of power and the rise of China. Political dialogue enhances mutual situation awareness on security developments in the Euro-Atlantic and Asia-Pacific regions. In today's complex security environment, relations with like-minded partners across the globe are increasingly important to address cross-cutting security issues and global challenges, as well as to defend the rules-based international order.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. MOULTON

Mr. MOULTON. While Russia is the most immediate threat in USEUCOM, we cannot take our eye off PRC influence in the region. General Wolters and Ms. Cooper, you both referred in your testimony to PRC efforts to expand access to European infrastructure, including through expanding 5G networks, and growing awareness about the risks of PRC state-backed firms and investment. Where are we still losing ground to China in Europe, or not getting that message of risk across? What additional tools or efforts does the Department need to properly address this threat in Europe?

Ms. COOPER. The Department regularly engages its allies and partners across Europe on the importance of securing sensitive supply chains, infrastructure, and technologies from undue influence by malign actors, which is critical for our collective security. We have seen progress among our European allies and partners, including strengthened laws and processes for foreign investment reviews, Memorandums of Understanding on 5G security, and other activities. The Department is eager to work with our European allies and partners to accelerate innovation and support the competitiveness of alternative suppliers. In addition, the Department supports focusing controls and restrictions on entities that further People's Republic of China (PRC)'s Military-Civil Fusion strategy and encourages publicly sharing information about these PRC entities with our European allies and partners.

Mr. MOULTON. This administration has made it clear that rebuilding international partnerships is a top priority, and this emphasis clearly aligns with the Future of Defense Task Force recommendations I made last year. In Europe, we have the opportunity to build common ethical and responsible standards for tech use with like-minded partners. Ms. Cooper, what steps are we taking right now to build those partnerships and common standards, and what steps should we take going forward to make progress on this topic?

Ms. COOPER. The United States and its European allies and partners are making strides to build common ethical and responsible standards for technology use. In February 2021, NATO Defense Ministers endorsed NATO's Coherent Implementation Strategy on Emerging and Disruptive Technologies, which promotes the development of new technologies to maintain our technological edge within the confines of robust principles of responsible use. This is a first step in building common standards, and we will continue to work with our individual allies and partners as well as through multinational institutions like NATO to ensure that new technologies are developed and used in a manner consistent with our shared values.

Mr. MOULTON. Both the Kremlin and Beijing have subjected NATO allies to regular cyber attacks in an effort to undermine our alliance, and NATO's response thus far has clearly been insufficient to deter further malicious cyber activity. What steps do we need to take to modernize NATO in order to sufficiently address this threat to infrastructure, operations, IP, and information access and to ensure the relevance of the alliance in a contemporary security environment?

Ms. COOPER. NATO recognizes that cyber threats to the Alliance are becoming more frequent and complex, disruptive, and coercive and that the Alliance must continue to adapt to the evolving cyber threat landscape. NATO has taken steps in recent years to recognize cyberspace as a domain of operations and to integrate cyber effects, provided voluntarily by allies, into Alliance operations and missions. Through the Cyber Defense Pledge, NATO Allies undertook to invest in better national cyber defenses, which will enhance deterrence through denial. In the recent case of the SolarWinds public attribution, NATO issued a statement of support for the United States in attributing this malicious cyber activity in order to promote accountability for those who carry out such actions. NATO is also in the process of updating its governance and cybersecurity procedures through a process known as

“Cyber Adaptation” to focus on cybersecurity responsibility and accountability. Finally, NATO is in the process of updating its 2014 Enhanced Cyber Defense Policy to enable the Alliance to do more collectively to address malicious cyber activities.

Mr. MOULTON. While Russia is the most immediate threat in USEUCOM, we cannot take our eye off PRC influence in the region. General Wolters and Ms. Cooper, you both referred in your testimony to PRC efforts to expand access to European infrastructure, including through expanding 5G networks, and growing awareness about the risks of PRC state-backed firms and investment. Where are we still losing ground to China in Europe, or not getting that message of risk across? What additional tools or efforts does the Department need to properly address this threat in Europe?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM highlights our shared values, interests, and equitable business practices with our Allies and Partners and distinguish the U.S. as a partner of choice. European nations are becoming increasingly aware of, and concerned about, the risks associated with Chinese capital investments from the People’s Republic of China (PRC). We must hold the PRC accountable for its predatory and unfair practices and make sure that our technologies are not facilitating the PRC’s military buildup or human rights abuses. A whole-of-government, whole-of-nation, whole-of-alliance approach to addressing a free and open globe are critical to sustaining peace in the Euro-Atlantic.

Mr. MOULTON. I recently published an op-ed with Dr. Tammy Schultz in Time about the vulnerability of our troops to online disinformation, much of which stems from Russia, and its impacts on mission readiness, in particular the high rate of troops declining the COVID-19 vaccine. General Wolters, what are you doing to ensure that troops in USEUCOM are able to protect themselves from malicious disinformation, both in their ability to recognize information campaigns and ensuring personal discipline in what information they share online?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM Operations Security (OPSEC) program and annual training requirements provide cyber training and threat awareness and response training to enable members to protect themselves from potential adversaries and disinformation. USEUCOM, its components, and commanders at all levels use installation websites, direct email notification, commander led town-halls, social media engagements, and unit-led discussions to relay truthful COVID-19 information that is in line with both CDC and Department of Defense guidance. This ensures our service members and families have access to factual, evidence based scientific information to make informed decisions.

Mr. MOULTON. Both the Kremlin and Beijing have subjected NATO allies to regular cyber attacks in an effort to undermine our alliance, and NATO’s response thus far has clearly been insufficient to deter further malicious cyber activity. What steps do we need to take to modernize NATO in order to sufficiently address this threat to infrastructure, operations, IP, and information access and to ensure the relevance of the alliance in a contemporary security environment?

General WOLTERS. NATO continues to adapt to the evolving cyber threat landscape. In 2020, NATO released the Concept for the Deterrence and Defense of the Euro-Atlantic Area. To support this effort, NATO bolstered deterrence efforts in cyberspace by establishing a cyberspace operations center at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Mons, Belgium. Integrating cyber and information effects in joint U.S.-NATO exercises enhances transparency and alignment and advances security cooperation. These combined efforts contribute to the Alliance’s ability to address malicious cyber activity in a 21st century security environment.

#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MRS. McCLAIN

Mrs. McCLAIN. ISIS fighters are being repatriated to their home countries in Europe from the Middle East. In your view, should our European allies take back these ISIS fighters and their families? If so, what steps is the administration taking in working with our European allies to ensure these fighters will not commit acts of violence or radicalize others in the future?

Ms. COOPER. Repatriating ISIS fighters and their associated family members is an important long-term solution to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) shoulder the responsibility of the international community by detaining approximately 10,000 ISIS fighters, including approximately 2,000 third country nationals (neither Syrian nor Iraqi) at great cost to its economy and local security. The United States maintains that countries of origin should repatriate their citizens from northeast Syria, prosecute the foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), as appropriate, and rehabilitate and reintegrate their associated family members. The continued presence of ISIS fighters in northeast Syria imperils mili-

tary gains achieved by the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS working by, with, and through the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). Off the battlefield, the SDF shoulders the responsibility of the international community by detaining approximately 10,000 ISIS fighters, including approximately 2,000 third country nationals (neither Syrian nor Iraqi). DOD is also concerned about displaced persons—especially juveniles—living in humanitarian camps such as al-Hol, which also place undue burden on our local Syrian partners. Most camp residents are children and some may be particularly susceptible to radicalization. In Syria, the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development provides humanitarian assistance, including some education and psychosocial support, to the residents of these camps. The Department of State is also working with European allies, by providing logistical support on repatriations when appropriate, along with improving their capabilities to rehabilitate and reintegrate individuals back into their local communities, and collaborates with Coalition partners to confront ISIS messaging globally via the Coalition's Communications Working Group.

Mrs. McCLAIN. As we begin to reexamine our involvement in the Middle East, what steps are we taking to ensure that young men and women are not radicalized in Europe and an ISIS 2.0 does not emerge to fill any power vacuums that may be created?

Ms. COOPER. ISIS seeks to exploit local grievances, lack of stabilization support, and security gaps to reconstitute and recruit in territory it formerly held, as well as to execute and inspire attacks outside the Middle East. To prevent the conditions for ISIS' resurgence, the United States and Coalition partners must continue stabilization efforts in areas liberated from ISIS. In concert with Coalition partners, the Department of State directed programming to further community resiliency, social cohesion, and reintegration for liberated areas in Iraq and Syria. In Europe, the Department of State leads efforts to encourage governments to implement policies that build resilience to terrorist narratives, enhance the capacity of youth to think critically, and challenge the influence of terrorist ideologies. Because communication is now globalized, stabilization efforts in the Middle East will help prevent radicalization elsewhere, including in Europe.

Mrs. McCLAIN. ISIS fighters are being repatriated to their home countries in Europe from the Middle East. In your view, should our European allies take back these ISIS fighters and their families? If so, what steps is the administration taking in working with our European allies to ensure these fighters will not commit acts of violence or radicalize others in the future?

General WOLTERS. The Department of State is more suited to discuss specifics on the Administration's actions to prevent radicalization and violence in countries who repatriate ISIS fighters and their families.

Mrs. McCLAIN. As we begin to reexamine our involvement in the Middle East, what steps are we taking to ensure that young men and women are not radicalized in Europe and an ISIS 2.0 does not emerge to fill any power vacuums that may be created?

General WOLTERS. The Department of State is more suited to discuss steps the Administration is taking to prevent radicalization.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY DR. JACKSON

Dr. JACKSON. Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Spain, the United Kingdom, and of course the United States participate in the Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Program. This is the world's only internationally manned and managed flying training program, and it was founded with the specific goal of producing combat pilots for the NATO alliance.

General Wolters, could you speak to the value that these international partnerships, like the one I just described at Sheppard Air Force Base, provide and then elaborate how these partnerships improve our ability to combat malign Russian aggression?

General WOLTERS. The Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Program (ENJJTP) is a long term success story, soon celebrating the 40th anniversary of its official opening which trains over 50 European fighter pilots a year. In addition to sharing a common airframe, sharing best practices and common understanding of employment enhances our transparency and alignment to train and operate alongside our Allies and Partners.

Dr. JACKSON. The Future Long Range Assault Aircraft program seeks to modernize the vertical lift fleet by delivering the most modern, versatile, and lethal power projection platform to ensure success on the modern battlefield.

General Wolters, can you speak to the importance of the Future Long Range Assault Aircraft program in deterring Russian aggression in eastern Europe and in the Arctic?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM benefits from the effort the Services take in developing versatile power projection capabilities to meet warfighting requirements. Any option to improve our speed and ability to deter aggression at range in the air domain would add value in generating peace.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. MOORE

Mr. MOORE. What message should the U.S. give European allies that are considering adopting Chinese 5G technology?

Ms. COOPER. 5G is transformative and will touch every aspect of our lives, including critical infrastructure, such as transportation, electricity distribution, health care, and more. DOD wants to ensure that information and communications technology (ICT) networks around the world remain secure, resilient, and reliable. It is important that European allies and partners consider the risks of using equipment from Chinese providers in 5G, undersea cables, and other strategic ICT areas—particularly where there are risks to how U.S. and allied forces operate. We encourage further collaboration on vendor diversity, open networks, and transparent standards. However, the United States must and will protect its own information and networks, including by reassessing how it shares information with countries that allow untrustworthy vendors on their networks.

Mr. MOORE. Since the Russian violations which led to the termination of the INF Treaty, what steps has EUCOM taken to fill the void of U.S. small-to-medium range missile deterrence?

General WOLTERS. USEUCOM benefits from the effort the Services take in developing versatile power projection capabilities to meet warfighting requirements. Any option to improve our speed and ability to deter aggression at range in the air domain would add value in generating peace.

Mr. MOORE. What steps have our NATO allies taken to confront Chinese aggression and increase their cooperation to guarantee a free and open Indo-Pacific?

General WOLTERS. NATO is adopting a global approach and developing closer relations with its four Asia-Pacific partners, namely Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and New Zealand. In December 2020, the four Asia-Pacific partners participated for the first time in a NATO Foreign Ministerial Meeting, discussing the shift in the global balance of power and the rise of China. Political dialogue enhances mutual situation awareness on security developments in the Euro-Atlantic and Asia-Pacific regions. In today's complex security environment, relations with like-minded partners across the globe are increasingly important to address cross-cutting security issues and global challenges, as well as to defend the rules-based international order.

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#### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. BROWN

Mr. BROWN. It is clear that the rising threat of white nationalism and far right extremism is not just a threat here in the United States but also overseas in Europe. What is your assessment of these threats to both the security of the United States and Europe, and how are we coordinating with our allies in addressing these threats? How can we leverage our partnerships with European allies to share lessons learned to identify and address these threats within both European and American forces?

Ms. COOPER. Extremist violence/terrorism is not a new phenomenon in Europe and the United States, but increasing incidents are a cause for concern. Extremist movements have a long history, but now they have additional tools at their disposal—namely social media and the ability to propagate disinformation at a significant rate. The United States works very closely with European allies and partners to counter disinformation on a daily basis and regularly shares best practices via NATO and bilateral mechanisms. The United States also works to lead by example in addressing extremism within our own ranks, as evidenced by the Secretary of Defense directing a “stand-down” day to ensure a concerted effort to educate the military and civilian workforce about the scope of this problem and to develop sustainable ways to eliminate the corrosive effects that extremist ideology and conduct have on the workforce. During this “stand-down,” with the goal of recognizing and addressing extremism now and in the future, the Department reviewed issues such as the importance of our oath of office; identification of impermissible behaviors; and procedures for reporting suspected, or actual, extremist behaviors. Several European



allies and partners sought information about curriculum used, and we will continue willingly to share best practices to encourage continued attention to this issue.

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**QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. MORELLE**

Mr. MORELLE. Ms. Cooper, how are the policies and budget priorities of the Department of Defense (DOD) shifting to support the Biden Administration's increased focus of deterrence against Russia? What does DOD intend to do differently as part of this policy, if anything?

Ms. COOPER. The United States has sought to deter Russian aggression through the credible demonstration of strength, in close coordination with NATO Allies and partners. The Department advances this aim through the effective use of military forces to strengthen our deterrence and defensive posturing and protect our core interests by building resilience and reducing vulnerability—including among Allies and partners. We will continue these efforts along with our Allies and partners to counter Russia's aggressive actions. The Department will leverage existing capabilities, build new ones where required, and employ them in new and networked ways—alongside our Allies and partners—to help ensure that Russia knows the costs and risks of aggression remain far greater than any conceivable benefit. The Department will pursue the right mix of technology, operational concepts, and capabilities to create advantages for ourselves and dilemmas for Russian planners.

Mr. MORELLE. General Wolters, can you expand on the impact of COVID-19 on competition with Russia and China in the European Command area of operations, and any measures you believe would better allow us to compete given the pandemic?

General WOLTERS. COVID-19 has presented challenges for nations across the globe, including those in Europe, and our deepest condolences are offered to all those impacted by this pandemic. In USEUCOM, we continue working diligently alongside Allies and Partners to ensure this health crisis does not become a security crisis. Thus far, our collective team has been successful, and we are buoyed through recent developments in vaccine production and distribution across the USEUCOM Area of Responsibility.

